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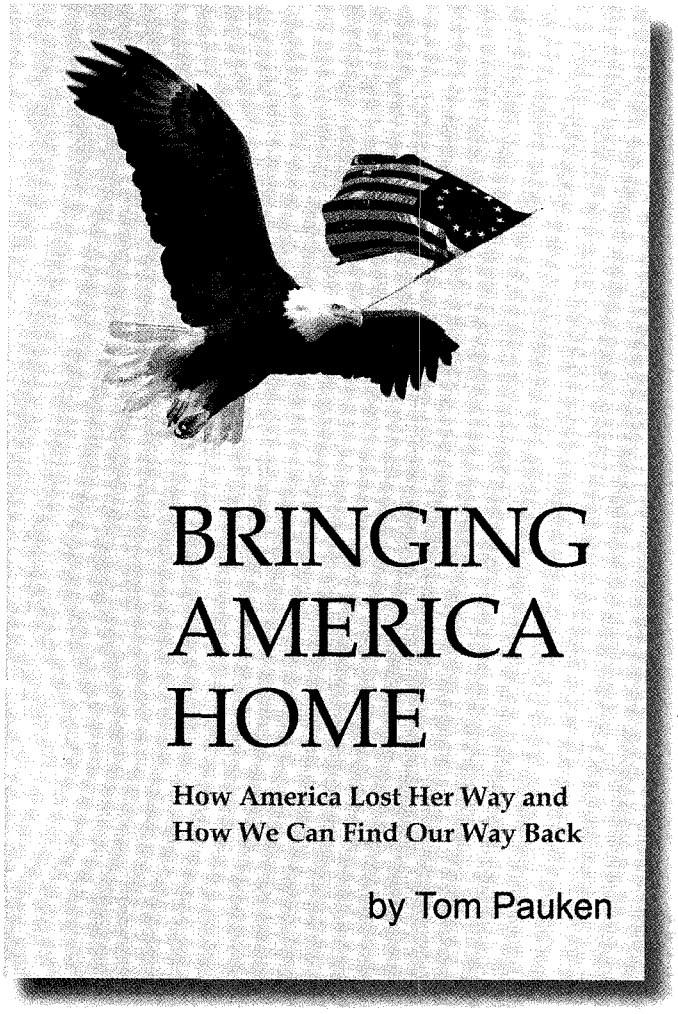

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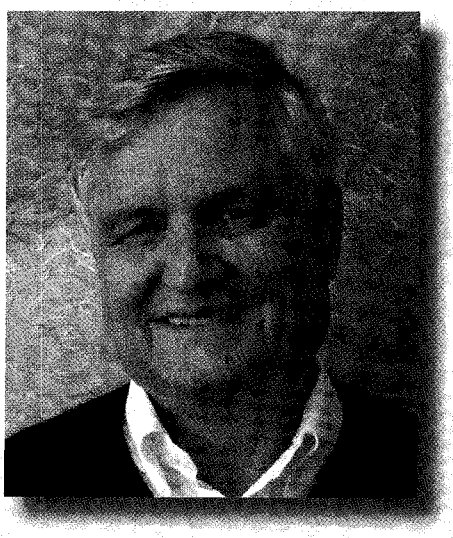

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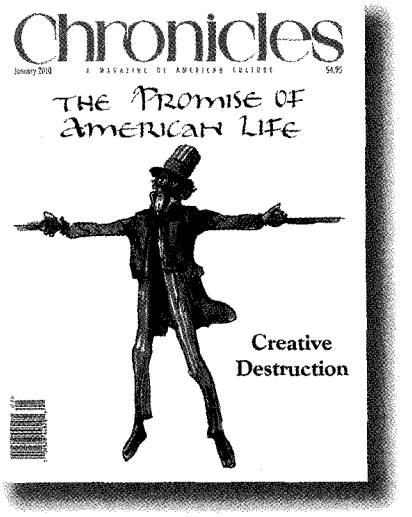

PERSPECTIVE

When the Going Gets Tough . . . 10
by Thomas Fleming

VIEWS

The Mass Age Medium and Future Shlock 14
by James O. Tate
Making sense of the 60's.

How To Survive "Creative Destruction" 17
by Greg Kaza
Clarifying terms.

NEWS

Too Big To Fail 20
by William J. Quirk
The underlying cause.

REVIEWS

At the Crossroads 25
by Justin Raimondo

Anne C. Heller: *Ayn Rand and the World She Made*

Jonathan Chaves on Fred Chappell's *Shadow Box: Poems* ◈ **Daniel Larison** on Giusto Traina's *428 AD: An Ordinary Year at the End of the Roman Empire* ◈ 28

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From the Classroom: Mashie Niblicks of the World, Unite! by Carey Harrison 34

VITAL SIGNS

MUSIC: **Bob Dylan**
by Christopher Sandford 40

No More Blues
by Tony Outhwaite 43

COLUMNS

SINS OF OMISSION 13
by Roger D. McGrath

UNDER THE BLACK FLAG 24
by Taki Theodoracopulos

LETTER TO THE BISHOP 32
by Joe Ecclesia

THE ROCKFORD FILES 33
by Scott P. Richert

BETWEEN THE LINES 37
by Justin Raimondo

EUROPEAN DIARY 39
by Andrei Navrozov

IN THE DARK 46
The Men Who Stare at Goats
by George McCartney

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD 48
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

DEPARTMENTS

AMERICAN PROSCENIUM 5
CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS 7

POETRY
January Daffodils 12
by Constance Rowell Mastores

ON THE COVER

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Mexico Way

A NOVEL BY

Chilton Williamson, Jr.

When retired U.S. Customs Bureau inspector Samuel Adams White (to his ex-wife, "the most boring human being") is abducted south of the border by Mexican drug smugglers, he is given the chance to flee for his life. Desperately trying to reach the border, he is pursued across the deserts of rural Mexico. Through a series of hair-raising adventures, the inspector discovers self-reliance, resourcefulness, the reality of the natural world—and of romance. The reader discovers the profound differences, as well as their origins and implications, between Mexican culture and that of El Norte, her neighbor across the Rio Grande. The tale is suffused with Williamson's understanding of and sympathy for a people among whom he is well traveled.

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by R. Cort Kirkwood

Janie's Got a Gun

The bodies were barely cold at Ft. Hood when *Slate.com* writer William Saletan unlimbered his guns. It is, he announced, time for the military to lift its policy exempting women from combat. His reason? A female civilian cop, Sgt. Kimberly Munley, took down Maj. Nidal Hasan and stopped the shooting spree that left 13 dead and 36 wounded. Her partner, a man, watched, apparently in utter stupefaction. Military brass put the gloss on Munley's derring-do. "It was amazing. Without her, there would have been a lot more people killed," said the fort's commanding officer. Thus, Saletan's salvo: "The exclusion of women from combat is a failed social experiment. It's time to end it."

Actually, after 200 years of exempting women from combat, the experiment is putting them in, but in any event the Ft. Hood story turned out to be too good to be true. Munley's black partner, Mark Todd, took out the terrorist. The truth of this case does not change the fact that women are playing increasing roles in combat operations, in which they are regularly maimed and killed. That truth means the military violates its own policies. It has to, because it has permitted so many women in the ranks that it cannot perform its mission without using them in combat zones.

The statistics speak for themselves. As ABC News recently reported, 10,000 women are serving in Iraq; 4,000 in Afghanistan. More than 120 women have died, not all of them combat deaths, and 600 have been wounded in action, according to a report compiled by the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). Some of these lady warriors have received combat decorations, which naturally has the feminists whistling the Colonel Bogey March. "We're here, and we're right up with the guys," SPC Ashley Pullen told ABC. Pullen was "awarded a Bronze Star for valor in 2005 for her heroic action in Iraq where she served with a military police unit."

"It's gotten worse," Elaine Donnelly of the Center for Military Readiness told the network. "It's the policymakers I fault in this. They are the ones responsible for deciding who goes where. The field officers are having to deal with problems like pregnancies, evacuation, sexual misconduct, romantic hostility. Right now people aren't discussing."

Indeed, they aren't. A recent story in the *Navy Times* reported that

> Some shore commands in the Norfolk, Va., area report that up to 34 percent of their billets are filled by pregnant sailors, and commanders are complaining about a "lack of proper manning to conduct their mission," according to a Naval Inspector General report. . . . Since shore assignments for pregnant sailors were extended two years ago, pregnancies Navy-wide have increased. The number of women leaving deploying units to have children rose from 1,770 in June 2006 to 3,125 as of Aug. 1.

This likely means that women are becoming pregnant on purpose to get shore assignments, and these statistics don't disclose what happens after the child is born and Mom returns to service. The Pentagon recently arrested a woman for refusing to deploy to Afghanistan because she couldn't find someone to care for her infant. The arrest, of course, sent the child into "protective custody."

Consider again the report from the IAVA: 30,000 single mothers have deployed, and female service members divorce at three times the rate of male ones. In some cases, both parents deploy, which raises the nettlesome question of who is watching the kids while Mom is off playing soldier. Or what happens when Mom comes back missing a leg and an arm. None of this, however, seems to be a problem. Leadership, the military avers, solves everything. Well, leadership can't solve Mom's lost limbs.

Mrs. Donnelly is right. Most people aren't discussing these things, and those who are wonder why any of it is a problem. If women want to serve, the thinking goes, let them. That, of course, assumes the feminists are right in saying women not only can handle the rigors of combat but have the right to fight. But they can't, and they don't.

In the early 1990's, I was a staff member on the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces. All the evidence the commission gathered pointed to one conclusion: Women are not suited for the rigors of combat and serious military endeavors. Among the biological facts commissioners learned (but in some cases did not want to hear) are that a woman's bones break and fracture more easily than a man's and that the average 20-something woman has the physical stamina of the average 50-year-old man. Those things mean something when soldiers are training and even more when they are fighting.

Supporters of women in combat argue that some women are as strong as men and that the military should permit those women to serve. But the statistical data suggest that such a recruiting policy would be folly. The commission learned that the strongest woman recruit is typically only as strong as the weakest man, so recruiting the strongest women would mean recruiting the weakest men. The military doesn't seek weak men. That doesn't mean a few weaklings don't make it through the vetting process, but purposely recruiting weak soldiers

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is insanity. And even presuming Amazonian wonders who are stronger than the weakest man exist and are suited for the rigors of combat, they have to be found. Once found, they have to enlist. In other words, recruiting them is a monumental waste of time and money. But going back to the average woman recruit, commissioners learned that sailorettes cannot pull fire hoses on ships, and women Air Force mechanics often need men to carry their toolboxes. How, then, will a 110-pound girl barely out of pigtails and pimple cream haul a 190-pound GI to safety?

Feminists and other supporters of women in combat know that ideology cannot trump nature. That is why they peddle falsehoods such as that of Sergeant Munley. Other storied heroics of women in combat have also turned out to be a "fusillade of fiction," as I reported three years ago, including the story of Capt. Linda Bray during Operation Just Cause, our "comic invasion" of Panama, where "this modern Athena crashed the gates of Manuel Noriega's guard-dog compound in a Jeep, her .50-caliber machine gun blazing" as if she were a member of the Rat Patrol. "But none of this happened.... Bray wasn't there." Then we had Jessica Lynch, who "played Custer to the Iraqi Indians. She fought to the last bullet, when she was shot, stabbed and captured. She was beaten in captivity." But again, "Lynch did nothing heroic. She did not shoot anything, and was not shot or stabbed."

Yet all these practical issues are immaterial because the feminists will continue searching for the right candidate to prove the military's exemption of women is archaic.

The issue, then, is a moral one. It isn't whether women can; it's whether they should. The answer to that question, at least for anyone claiming to be a Christian, is no. For one thing, no one has a "right" to serve. For military volunteers, it is a privilege. For draftees, it is a duty.

More importantly, putting women in combat trespasses the natural order and mocks what God intended women to do. He did not equip them for war. Opening the battlefield to women is egalitarianism of a different order than opening the doors to the courtroom or operating room. Properly training men to accept women as combatants necessarily requires training them to accept the brutalization and killing of women as a norm. Given the constant drumbeat about domestic violence, you wouldn't think inuring men to violence against women is something feminists would want. Men are supposed to protect women; they aren't supposed to kill them or stand by and watch them be killed.

Putting women in combat is a sin, and not just because it is barbaric. It encourages bearing false witness—that God did thus prepare them—which in turn suggests that men and women are interchangeable, except for a few body parts. It suggests, as presidential commissioner Charles Moskos said, that men are big women and that women are little men.

Like the story about Sergeant Munley, that is a lie. ©

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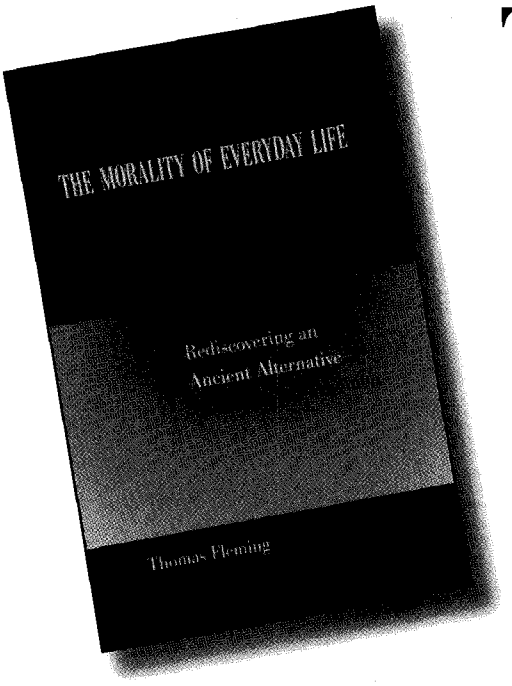

The Morality of Everyday Life

Rediscovering an Ancient Alternative to the Liberal Tradition

by Thomas Fleming

"Writing much more accessibly and knowledgeably than most modern, professional philosophers, Fleming revivifies the body of thought with which civilization was created and without which it is disintegrating."

—*Ray Olson,* Booklist

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GUNS INCORPORATED?

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to review *McDonald* v. *City of Chicago*, a case that presents the watershed issue of whether the individual right to bear arms under the Second Amendment, established in 2008 in *District of Columbia* v. *Heller*, applies to states. Most Court observers agree that it appears very likely that the *Heller* majority—Chief Justice Roberts and Justices Scalia (who wrote the opinion), Thomas, Alito, and Kennedy—will stay together to incorporate this new reading against state and local gun regulations. (*McDonald*, like *Heller*, involves a handgun ban.) Such a result will visit irreparable damage on the doctrine of original understanding, which ascertains constitutional meaning through text and history, and the judicial modesty necessary to adhere to it. Result-driven judicial imperialism will now, alas, have both a conservative and a liberal version.

Heller itself is the root of the problem. In that case, Justice Scalia brought together a large quantity of historical information to support the argument that the Second Amendment embodies an individual right not connected to military service to keep and bear arms. However, in a cogent dissent that also relied extensively on history, Justice Stevens concluded that the amendment did not create any such individual right. Despite the fact that the historical record does not point unambiguously to one conclusion on such a complicated question, the *Heller* decision aggressively declared a brand-new individual right.

Justice Scalia's opinion received predictable criticism from liberals, but the most devastating critique of *Heller* comes from the esteemed conservative jurist J. Harvie Wilkinson III of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. In his trenchant analysis, "Of Guns, Abortions, and the Unraveling Rule of Law," published in the *Virginia Law Review*, Wilkinson argues that *Heller* "represents a failure—the Court's failure to adhere to a conservative judicial methodology in reaching its decision."

In fact, says Wilkinson, the Court's failure in *Heller* is strikingly similar to the catastrophe that is *Roe* v. *Wade*. Wilkinson identifies "four major shortcomings" in *Heller*: "an absence of a commitment to textualism; a willingness to embark on a complex endeavor that will require fine-tuning over many years of litigation; a failure to respect legislative judgments; and a rejection of the principles of federalism." Wilkinson expects the incorporation of the Second Amendment with its *Heller* reading. And that extension is precisely the problem: "As courts get drawn farther into the gun control thicket, they will be forced, as they were by *Roe*, to decide contentious questions without clear constitutional guidance."

Even with all its flaws, the *Heller* decision currently applies only to the District of Columbia. The Second Amendment has not yet been applied against the states. This process of applying to the states the specific guarantees of the Bill of Rights, which originally were restrictions that operated against only the federal government, is known as "incorporation." Decades after the ratification of the 14th Amendment in 1868, the Court began, without any textual or historical basis, the piecemeal application of various provisions of the Bill of Rights to the states through the Due Process Clause of that amendment ("nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law"). The entire Bill of Rights is not incorporated (the Fifth Amendment's indictment-by-grand-jury requirement, for instance, does not bind the states); we currently have a system of "selective incorporation."

Incorporation is a true revolution in American politics and law. It has subverted the careful balance between federal and state power and dramatically increased the power of federal courts. It is, moreover, a judicially manufactured revolution in its entirety. With its highly dubious historical foundation, incorporation is a doctrine that originalists have rightly challenged for its absence of legitimacy, even as they must live with its precedential force. Now, they are being seduced with a new theory in *McDonald*: the idea that the Second Amendment can be incorporated through the Privileges or Immunities Clause of the 14th Amendment ("No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States").

Historically, this clause was rendered a nullity in *The Slaughter-House Cases* (1873). All of the subsequent extratextual judicial overreaching, whether through incorporation or the judicial invention of rights, has been through the Due Process Clause. In recent decades, however, scholars of the government-by-judiciary school have been attracted to a revival of the Privileges or Immunities Clause because of its vagueness. (And not only scholars: In a 1999 case, Justice Thomas expressed interest in the clause's resuscitation.) The most adroit advocate of judicial adventurism of his time, John Hart Ely, in his enormously influential book *Democracy and Distrust* (1980), concluded that "the most plausible interpretation of the Privileges or Immunities Clause is, as it must be, the one suggested by its language—that it was a delegation to future constitutional decision-makers to protect certain rights that the document neither lists, at least not exhaustively, nor even in any specific way gives directions for finding."

This reading provides a very capacious abode for the judge-as-policymaker ideal that is beloved of judicial supremacists but is, or used to be, anathema to conservatives. An incorporated *Heller* would mean that every gun regulation enacted by state and local governments would potentially be subject to review by federal courts, which have no expertise or guidance in this area. The serious flaws identi-

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fied by Wilkinson will lead to increasingly subjective and *ad hoc* judicial rulings by those who, in all other contexts, are the fiercest critics of that slipshod method of judging.

The interpretive doctrine of original understanding has reached a high level of sophistication and influence, especially in the opinions of Justices Scalia and Thomas. However, it is in danger of losing its principled foundation because its most celebrated practitioners are pursuing the nationalization of an individual right to bear arms on exceedingly thin constitutional authority. Wilkinson is justified in his yoking of *Heller* with *Roe*, and once the questionable determination reached in *Heller* applies to every gun regulation enacted at any level of government, it will be well-nigh impossible to tell the originalists from the make-it-up-as-you-go-along crowd on the Court.

—*Gregory J. Sullivan*

FISH OR CUT BAIT

President Obama's nationally televised speech announcing an increase in troop levels in Afghanistan was everything we have come to expect from one of his speeches: vapid, dishonest, puerile, and–most of all–confused. Speaking grandly of an exit strategy he never defined, he did not once address the more serious question of an *entrance strategy*. What possible reason did we ever have for going into that awful place, except to kill people we don't like? I'll give Obama this: The man never disappoints; he always lives down to my lowest expectations.

So do the Republicans. While the reaction to Obama's speech by many peacenik Democrats was at best lukewarm, Lindsey Graham, John McCain, and even Karl Rove jumped on Obama's war wagon, thumping their little tin drums for more blood. Their only complaint is that it has taken so long to fall 10,000 soldiers short of General McChrystal's request. To a man, the GOP's leadership appears to think that General Petraeus should be left to run the war–and the world, if necessary.

The problem with Obama and his administration is not that they are either pacifists or militarists but that they are as clueless as Robert McNamara or Jimmy Carter. For my entire adult life, I have watched U.S. foreign-policy and defense gurus lead us into debacle after debacle. Whether in Southeast Asia, Central America, or the Middle East, these people, time after time, rush headlong into a conflict without pausing to consider what their objectives are or what victory requires. Inevitably, they think they can win on the cheap. The result is always the same: massive slaughter, a rise in anti-Americanism, and failure.

I am not now nor have ever been an isolationist. America is the greatest power in the world today, and any American government must play its cards, as a world power, in the interest of the American people—as opposed to the interest of arms manufacturers or the Israel Lobby. Although the elaboration of any policy would require great knowledge and experience and considerable prudence, there are only two possible winning strategies: We can either mind our own business or build a great empire.

If, as it appears, our Yankee Puritan heritage prevents us from following the wise policy of benign neutrality advocated by George Washington, then let the megalomaniacs pursue their dreams of empire. But if they do, let them freely acknowledge what they are doing, without taking refuge in such cowardly evasions as wars to end wars, spreading democracy, or building an "imperium." They want an empire because it feels good to make everyone else cower, and because there is so much money to be made. For most American politicians, greed and *libido dominandi* are about the noblest motives of which they are capable.

If they are hell-bent on creating an empire, fine, let them do it (or at least try), but they shall need to raise taxes, reinstitute the draft, and be prepared for the terrible bloodshed that might slake their lust for blood. Some people don't actually want to be ruled by the United States, and some of them even understand that all this talk about peace and democracy and human rights is simply code for American imperialism. And some of them even are crazy enough to fight back when they are attacked. If someone else is the aggressor, we call the resisters "freedom fighters," but when America is stomping on them, they are terrorists.

If we are going to pretend to be Romans, let us act like Romans—the Romans who were lenient in victory and offered the benefit of a better legal system and higher culture to most of their conquered peoples. If a Gallic chieftain raised a little rebellion, however, Julius Caesar and his successors were absolutely merciless in slaughtering and enslaving the rebels. It took several generations for the Gauls to calm down and give up their language and their bloodthirsty gods, but in the end they were probably better off–until the Germans invaded and Rome was too weak to repel the invaders. Empires bring in rewards, but the costs are high. If our own imperialists want to carve out an American province that stretches from Israel to Iraq to Afghanistan, let them do it, but not on the cheap. Imperial conquest requires much money and many lives.

The question is, therefore, whether to fish or cut bait. I have been saying this same thing for 40 years. The insight flashed in my mind when I received a personal reply to a letter I'd sent my congressman, complaining about the extension of the Vietnam War to Cambodia. L. Mendel Rivers was chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and the biggest warhawk in Congress. His reply shocked me at the time. He said, in essence, "I agree with you. If we are not determined to win this war, then we should not be fighting it." I disagreed with Mendel's militarism, but for all his weaknesses he was a real American statesman. It was a dying breed then and an extinct species today. That is only one of many reasons why we cannot entrust even a brushfire war—much less a grand imperial strategy—to the American political class today. They will never learn

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how to fish, and they are too afraid of knives to cut bait.

—*Thomas Fleming*

CASH FOR CLUNKERS

When Alan Blinder first proposed the Car Allowance Rebate System (CARS), commonly referred to as the Cash for Clunkers program, in a July 2008 *New York Times* op-ed, he foresaw benefits to the economy and the environment, and a "more equal income distribution." The program has fallen rather short of its intended mark.

Most of the media have been calling Cash for Clunkers a huge success because of overwhelming participation, which resulted in about 700,000 trades. But *Edmonds.com*, a leading automobile-consumer resource, issued a press release in October claiming that "Cash for Clunkers cost taxpayers $24,000 per vehicle sold." Analysts looked at the number of luxury vehicles and others not included in the program and used the historical relationship between those numbers and the seasonally adjusted annual rate of cars sold to determine how many cars would have been sold, were it not for Cash for Clunkers. The analysis determined that of the nearly 700,000 purchases, only 125,000 would not have happened anyway. The others were already planned—buyers who had heard the program was coming and waited to purchase a vehicle, or those who perhaps would otherwise have held on to their "junkers" a little longer. The White House returned fire, suggesting that this was equivalent to saying that "all the other cars were being sold on Mars, while the rest of the country was caught up in the excitement of the Cash for Clunkers program."

Still, the program's boosters ask, don't we have cleaner air, now that all those gas-guzzling pick-ups are off the road? Perhaps, but not by much. The Associated Press reports that the program cut carbon-dioxide emissions by about 700,000 tons per year—out of a total 6.4 billion tons—a drop in an oil field. And the long-term effect on carbon emissions is hard to predict. Dr. Christopher R. Knittel of the University of California, Davis, points out that those who have more fuel-efficient cars generally drive more. People who might have taken public transportation or carpooled now have less reason to do so. We have spent billions of dollars and may make only a minimal impact on carbon emissions.

In his July 2008 op-ed, Blinder wrote, "It won't surprise you to learn that the well-to-do own relatively few clunkers. Most are owned, instead, by low-income people. So if the government bought some of these vehicles at above-market prices, it would transfer a little purchasing power to the poor." This assumes that low-income families can afford to buy a car, new or used, even with government aid, and that they can afford new-car payments. What about those looking for cars in the $1,000-$3,500 range? Fewer used cars means higher used-car prices. The used-car industry, reported the Associated Press in August, was already suffering from "[f]luctuations in gas prices and higher prices at car auctions." Now, in an economy in which people tend to hold on to their cars even longer, used-car dealerships are having a difficult time replacing their inventory—let alone selling it at prices that poorer folks can afford.

Automotive recyclers are also experiencing the drawbacks of this program. By law, the engines of the "clunkers" must be destroyed with liquid glass, and the drive train has to be disassembled before recyclers can sell it. Those two components, according to an MSNBC report, are usually responsible for about 60 percent of the profit gleaned from a recycled car. If the recyclers don't have time to disassemble the drive train, that's a lot of profit gone. And time is one thing these businesses are sorely lacking. The Automotive Recyclers Association has sought an extension of the January deadline for crushing, claiming that larger-than-expected participation in the program, as well as dealer delays in getting clunkers to salvage yards, are making it impossible to get all of the valuable parts out of the cars before they have to be crushed.

My cousin, who operates his family's auto and truck parts business in southern Alabama, is seeing firsthand the effects of Cash for Clunkers. He employs nine people but could use one full-time employee just to file the mountains of required paperwork for CARS. He used to get around $15 per pound for the scrap metal from a crushed car; in this flooded market, he now gets about $5 per pound. He says that many people are already defaulting on their payments because they bought cars they really couldn't afford, and that small dealerships operating on a month-to-month basis have been unable to hold out for the government's promised rebate checks.

Did anyone benefit from Cash for Clunkers? Well, the program had to hire temporary "agents," who pop into dealerships and salvage yards around the country making sure that all those behemoths are being properly disposed of. So yes, there were some jobs created.

Cash for Clunkers was not the result of a serious, studied look at what might be done to help the American automotive industry or the economy. And it has hurt the very people Barack Obama claimed, in his campaign, to want to help—small-business owners and everyday Americans.

—*Nicole M. Kooistra*

OBITER DICTA

Our poet this month is **Constance Rowell Mastores**. Her poems have appeared in *Artweek*, the *Atlanta Review*, *Bellowing Ark*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Boulevard*, the *Comstock Review*, *Coracle*, *DAYbreak*, the *Eclectic Muse*, the *Lyric*, *Modern Haiku*, the *Neovictorian/Cochlea*, *Poetry Flash*, *Press*, *Rattapallax*, *Tiger's Eye*, and *Visions International*, among others.

Our cover is a reprise of the July 1991 cover, by renowned artist **Warren Chappell**.

Our interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

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by Thomas Fleming

When the Going Gets Tough . . .

> Would that I were not among the men of the fifth generation, but either had died before or been born afterwards. For now truly is a race of iron, and men never rest from labour and sorrow by day, and from perishing by night; and the gods shall lay sore trouble upon them . . . And Zeus will destroy this race of mortal men also when they come to have grey hair on the temples at their birth.

Hesiod, the author of this gloomy prediction, lived in troubled times. The glory days, if anyone could still remember them, had been four or five centuries earlier, when the offspring of the gods lived in their great palaces at Mycenae, Tiryns, and Boeotian Thebes. The palaces had been burnt by invaders, and many of the Achaeans had fled. Hesiod's own village in rural Boeotia, like much of mainland Greece, was experiencing a continuous crisis. Land was scarce and infertile, and prospects were bleak. In a dispute over inheritance, Hesiod had lost out to his brother Perses, who had bribed the village chiefs to give judgment in his favor, and Hesiod directs much of this poem, *Works and Days*, to advising Perses against greed and contentiousness. Hesiod may have been the first known writer, though by no means the last, to have converted personal misfortune into a general prophecy of doom.

Hesiod's works are masterpieces of history. History, remember, is not what happened in the past, but neither is it the nit-picking exercise of dissertation writers stringing footnotes together in an exercise of what Clyde Wilson calls "honest plagiarism." The historian is someone who goes in search of reality and imposes his vision of the past upon his people.

Hesiod, in his quest for truth, told many tales of gods and men, how order came from an original jumble of elements, how the divine powers begat each other, and how one race succeeded another in the Hesiodic "progression" from gold to silver to bronze to iron. Since ancient times we have gone through ages of lead, tinfoil, corrugated cardboard, plastic, and our own age of genetically reengineered organisms created in the image of man.

It is the old old story of man's decline from the Golden Age, his expulsion from Eden. It corresponds to our personal sense of history. *In my day, children walked to school and returned at midday for a lunch their mother prepared. Now it's nothing but working mothers and punk children.* Once when I was delivering a declamation of the "*O tempora o mores*" type dear to every reactionary, a listener pointed out that every crank since Socrates had made the same complaint. Well, I responded, what if they were all right?

Obviously, entropy is a fact of human history, but it is not the only fact. Although we typically fall short of our fathers in many ways, we may in some fields, most obviously science and technology, exceed them. Thus, a rich historical vision that is true to human experience must include some provision for the revivals that punctuate the deepening gloom with shafts of golden light. Even old Hesiod put the age of heroes between the Age of Bronze and the Age of Iron, and Romans of Augustus' time celebrated the return of the Golden Age. It was in Augustus' reign that the Messiah came, Who interrupted the downward course of the human race and Who, when we have sufficiently degenerated again, will return to rescue the faithful.

We cannot help thinking this way, not because we are Christians who have the truth, but because we are human beings in whom the seeds of truth were planted from the beginning. The myths and legends of earlier peoples, then, find their fulfillment in the Christian story. Thus, our minds are in the grip of one of two paradigms—or both of them: the paradigm of steady decline and the paradigm of renascence and renewal. But for both of them to work in tandem, there must be Dark Ages to separate the Ages of Gold: the Greek world between the end of the Bronze Age and the Homeric epics, or Christian Europe between the fall of Rome and the coronation of Charlemagne. Whether we have entered our own Dark Age is a subject of some controversy, but it is hard to ignore the mounting evidence of financial decline and death-metal culture.

Even though these paradigms, dictated by the *Logos*, are true, we should resist the temptation to apply them simplistically. A little chaos, "a little revolution now and then," can act as a tonic. If the Mycenaean citadels had not fallen, Greek civilization would never have arisen in the rubble. Undoubtedly, the effects of the Roman collapse were even more catastrophic to those who endured them, but in the ruins of the empire bold men began to carve out baronies and kingdoms, monks wrestled with thorny problems, minstrels learned new songs, and farmers invented the moldboard plow. A Dark Age is what you make of it.

The history of ancient Egypt is dominated by these paradigms. Out of chaos emerged the Old Kingdom that united Upper and Lower Egypt before collapsing back into

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disunity during the First Intermediate Period. Wise rulers gradually reunited Egypt to create the Middle Kingdom, which fell into chaos and disunity in the shock of the Hyksos invasion, and, after a Second Intermediate Period, the even more brilliant New Kingdom arose. More recent Egyptologists tell a rather different story, pointing out that it was in the so-called intermediate periods (their two Middle Ages) that Egyptians made their greatest cultural breakthroughs.

The settlement of North America, in many ways, was a voluntary entrance into a Dark Age. Although the cities on the eastern seaboard soon aped the civilization of Europe, the frontier, as it moved westward, exposed generation after generation of Americans to conditions a good deal more primitive than post-Roman Christians faced in the time of Clovis. They had to rely on themselves and on their neighbors for whatever social order or security they could achieve. The frontier experience, from Jamestown to Alaska, created an American character that was, paradoxically, more conservative and European because it was rooted in a new Dark Age, and this character, which persisted into the 20th century, partly explains how our parents and grandparents survived and even thrived during two wars interrupted by a depression.

I think of my father, who, although an atheist, was what we used to call an honest-to-God American. Nothing and nobody seemed to intimidate him. On his mother's side, his Scottish family could trace its history in North America back to the 18th century, and it was his mother's family that had once been rich before someone lost his business—a major utility company—in a poker game. His father's family were Irish immigrants, though a family tradition says that they had gone to Kerry from Scotland after the '45. Who knows? Like other Irish immigrants, the men in my father's family were policemen and politicians. His father, said to have been involved in Chicago politics, was murdered when my father was only 14 years old, though what kind of politics gets a man murdered is not a topic on which the family liked to speculate.

My father had to identify his father's body at the morgue, and shortly afterward he assumed responsibility for taking care of his mother and sisters. He took part-time jobs after school and even managed to go to Northwestern. I was told he took a master's degree eventually, but perhaps this was my mother's exaggeration. He was nearly 20 when the stock market crashed, and to make money he went to sea. In a very real sense, he never left it, though he abandoned his seafaring career not long after I was born.

He began as a coal stoker, which helps to explain his amazing musculature. I say helps, because he was already powerfully built. To improve a physique that had been ravaged in childhood by diphtheria, he had taken rough jobs: as a ranch hand, logger, and—worst of all, he said—cutting ice in the winter. Blacklisted for his union activities, first on saltwater and then on the lakes, my father decided to become an officer. He was in one of the first (perhaps *the* first) classes at the Maritime Academy. He tried but failed (twice) to enter the Marine Corps, even though he bribed a doctor to certify him as fit. The diphtheria had damaged his heart permanently, and he would die of a heart attack in his early 70's. As a merchant engineer, he had enough of the war to slake his desire for patriotic danger.

Although he disliked business, he became a small businessman and eventually half-owner of a minor-league franchise. He was good at his job, and one year he was even named the Minor League Baseball executive of the year, but he never made a great deal of money. He was too busy enjoying life. He was a great shot and a fine fisherman. Until he put on weight, he had also been quite a horseman. He read incessantly, mostly history, and, like most people with too much Celtic blood, he had all sorts of opinions. He detested the German usurpers on the British throne and in general hated the English, though he took the side of his Tory ancestors who would not fight against the king and fled to Canada in the 1770's. Every family has—or used to have—its own history of the world, and we got a triple dose, listening to my father's stories. Any program or film on television could inspire a discourse on Al Capone, Sophocles' *Oedipus*, or the rotten and perfidious Joe Kennedy, who, in my father's view, was the exemplary member of the American elite—a gangster capitalist and war profiteer who was hell-bent on putting his son into the White House. A lifelong Democrat, he voted for Jack Kennedy anyway.

Among the many wise and weird things he told me, one remark stands out. I had, as a young man, expressed some anxiety about getting a job. He told me that he had no fear of the future. If we went completely bankrupt, he said, he could go to any town in the United States and get a job, if only sweeping out the back of a store or bar and grill. "In a week, I'd be running the place." This was, even then, before résumés and application forms had bureaucratized the workplace, something of an exaggeration, but it was basically true. He was honest, hard-working, and resourceful. Another way to put it was that he was quite simply an American, which partly explains his love of the Southwest, especially Texas, to which he dragged my mother when both were in their 60's. He no longer rode much, but he still liked to be around horses and horsemen.

A Dark Age is what you make of it. The true American character was forged in danger and hardship and bitter necessity, but that character has been diluted by mass immigration and weakened by the very success it achieved. The weakness of our character was revealed by the numbers of people who, against all reason, voted for Barack Obama, because they were afraid. The majority of mankind, however, is always made up of weak and frightened people. It has always been an elite—the whaling men and pioneers, cowboys and entrepreneurs—who have defined the real America. Perhaps I am letting my optimism show, but, whatever happens to the country as a whole, I believe that we Americans need not fear any Dark Age, so long as there are still a few men like my father or the Texans he came to admire. ©

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January Daffodils

by Constance Rowell Mastores

for FBR at 97

I have placed them in a vase
near the kitchen window,
their sheathed petals
already beginning to twist
into the narrow winter light.
I study their expectation.

Tomorrow, I will take them
to my mother, arrange
them according to her wish,
as she gazes, with those
eyes that seem to slow
and sorrow, on the dry, trans-
lucent casings that fall away
in the service of the flowers.

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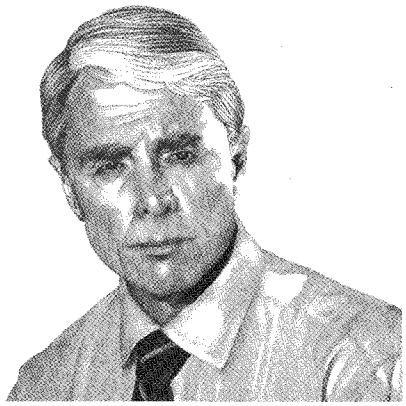
by Roger D. McGrath

Pancho Villa



There are hundreds of Mexican restaurants in the United States named for the revolutionary Pancho Villa. Photos of the Durango native line the walls, and his raid on the small American hamlet of Columbus, New Mexico, is celebrated. Nowhere is mentioned the many atrocities Villa and his forces regularly committed. Torture, rape, and murder were not uncommon. Yet, in today's educational climate it is doubtful that more than a handful of professors describe him or his raid in anything but p.c. terms. As with his true name, Doroteo Arango, his true history will continue to be obscured.

Many theories have been proffered to explain Villa's motivation for attacking Columbus: President Wilson announced U.S. support for the Carranza government; the United States allowed Mexican troops railroad passage from El Paso to Douglas, Arizona, where they recrossed the border and defeated Villa in the battle of Agua Prieta; a Columbus merchant cheated Villa on an arms deal. There may be some truth in each of these theories, but a far more likely explanation is something we know for certain. Having endured a rugged winter after being badly defeated at Agua Prieta in November 1915, Villa found his arms, ammunition, horses, mules, and supplies nearly exhausted. His scouts told him that Columbus, only three miles above the border, and the adjacent U.S. Army post, Camp Furlong—not much more than a few buildings, a collection of tents, stacked supplies, and corrals—had everything they needed and would be soft targets.

An hour past midnight on March 9, 1916, Villa and 500 of his mounted marauders passed through a gap his scouts had cut in the barbed-wire border fence south of Columbus. A mile short of town, Villa deployed his Villistas, some dismounting and going forward on foot. They waited in the darkness for the word to attack. At 4:10 A.M. came the cry, "*Vayanse adelante, muchachos! Muerte a los gringos!*"

Pvt. Fred Griffin, standing guard at Camp Furlong, challenged the shadowy figures he saw approaching. Gunfire erupted in reply. He was hit by several rounds but killed three of the attackers before he collapsed, mortally wounded. The gunfire awakened the camp and the town. Residents peered out of windows to see hundreds of Villistas shooting into and torching homes and businesses. Railroad worker Milton James tried to lead his pregnant wife from their flimsy clapboard dwelling to the relative safety of the adobe-walled Hoover Hotel. A Villista shot her in the stomach, killing both her and her baby. Nine others were gunned down, and two more wounded. Dozens of armed civilians began to return fire, often with deadly effect.

The troopers of the 13th Cavalry at Camp Furlong, most of them sound asleep when the first gunshots rang out, sprang into action with surprising alacrity. Lt. James Castleman, commanding officer of Troop F, raced to organize his men for a counterattack. A Villista fired at him, missing by inches. Castleman returned fire, and the Mexican fell to the ground, dead. The lieutenant found his men already armed and formed up by Sgt. Michael Fody. Castleman led them in an attack on the Villistas' right flank, turning it and driving the Villistas from the regimental headquarters. He then moved his men into Columbus and began driving Villistas from businesses and homes.

Lt. John Lucas, who would serve as a major general with George Patton during World War II, raced barefoot from his quarters to organize his machine-gun troop. Within minutes he had his men firing the notoriously unreliable French-made Benet-Mercie guns. They worked well enough to turn the Villistas' left flank and allow Lucas to move on the business district. Soon the forces of Lucas and Castleman had the Villistas in a crossfire, and the Mexicans could do nothing but flee for their lives.

About this time Col. Herbert Slocum, commander of Camp Furlong, arrived from Deming, some 35 miles to the north, where he had spent the night following a polo match. He immediately took command and had Maj. Frank Tompkins lead a force of 55 troopers in hot pursuit of the fleeing Villistas. Tompkins followed them across the border and 15 miles into Mexico, killing more of the raiders along the way. In their haste to escape, the Villistas dropped most of the supplies and arms they had looted, and abandoned many of the horses they had stolen. Tompkins would be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Eight men of the 13th Cavalry had been killed and another six wounded. The bodies of 67 Villistas lay in Columbus and Camp Furlong, and several dozen more along the route of retreat. Blood trails indicated dozens more had been badly wounded but carried away. The Army estimated that Villa lost nearly 200 of his men. Villa himself had watched the battle from the safety of a hilltop west of town.

Although the Punitive Expedition later sent into Mexico failed to capture Villa, it hardly mattered. After his defeats at Agua Prieta and Columbus, he was a greatly diminished figure whose power was restricted to a portion of western Chihuahua. When revolutionary activity finally ceased in 1920, he was granted a *hacienda* near Parral. He did not live long to enjoy it. He was assassinated in 1923.

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The Mass Age Medium and Future Shlock

Making Sense of the 60's

by James O. Tate

The recent passing of Mary Travers—who, with Peter and Paul, was years ago always intoning that the answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind—brought back some quaint memories of *kumbaya* moments, and the consoling thought that at least Mary Travers lived long enough to see her political vision fulfilled in the person of Barack Obama. The recent revival of the "musical" *Hair* also took me back, or to be more precise, I was taken aback by it. Who would want to see now what was entirely vacuous the first time around? I avoided it then, but I couldn't have avoided the 60's altogether, now could I? I tried, but I wasn't at that time ready for the physical extinction that would seem to have been required. Maybe I should have had more nerve—maybe there are some who wish I had—but however that may be, long hair and nudity seemed to be something less than an achievement then, and still seem so today. The 60's were a mess from which we have never recovered, and I doubt we ever will. The bizarre principle of the ubiquity of loud, ugly music has been accepted for decades, and the related principles that political thought is defined by identity groups, and that sweaty passion is the hallmark of authenticity, are with us today in full force. Violence, drugs, and even riots took strange forms then, and they still do.

When did the 60's begin? The precipitant and propelling elements went way back in American history and culture—I didn't recognize the pre-60's elements of the 50's until later on. To me, the 60's began with the assassination of JFK on November 22, 1963. I was at my desk at college when a roommate rushed in, announced the facts, and quickly said, "It must have been one of those Southern racists!" To which I instantly replied, "Sounds more like a communist to me."

I would point out that the anomaly of the assassination was followed hard upon, only a few months later, by the incursion of the Beatles; and I would also point out that the word *assassination* is derived from the word *hashish*. The prevalence of drugs, the sexual revolution, pop music, pop art, and all the rest of it, seemed to be all of a piece. Norman Mailer was soon writing about the Age of Aquarius, Truman Capote was writing about bloody murder, and Tom Wolfe made a name for himself in the scramble. We heard about Andy Warhol and Antonioni and the Rolling Stones and Twiggy and all the rest of it, not neglecting the late and commanding figure of the decade, Charles Willis Manson. This seems to be the place to say that *Helter Skelter* (1974) by Vincent Bugliosi is a book that will be read when so many others are forgotten—a book that Poe, Hawthorne, and Melville would have recognized as related, in its documented truth, to their own visionary and obsessed work.

So of course there was a lot I didn't like about the 60's. I didn't like Pauline Kael and was repelled then by *Blowup*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and *The Graduate*—and still am. I liked Andrew Sarris a lot and enjoyed the debut of *El Dorado* on 42nd Street, as the only white in an audience of hundreds. I spent a lot of time in the Thalia on 95th Street learning about real movies, and a lot of time in the Columbia library learning about real books. I enjoyed some popular music and even more a connection with the blues, and even more still the chance to get nearer to music-making itself. I talked with Leopold Stokowski in the cheap seats at Carnegie Hall; he asked me (!) about the quality of the concert by "his" orchestra. (The program included "La Peri" of Dukas, conducted by Paul Paray.) I told that elegant gentleman that everything was just fine.

I hung out in the Village sometimes. I remember relishing particularly James Cotton—he could really play the blues harp—and Mike Bloomfield, perhaps the greatest of slide guitarists, and too bad about that heroin problem. But there was a lot of trash as well as flash. Al Kooper seemed to me to be a fraud, and there were other frauds in other arts, such as the sale by some hirsute entrepreneur of revolving squares of masonite upon which one was supposed to squirt acrylic paints, thereby creating contemporary art. This was for the Jersey kids on the weekends, mind you. The resulting absurdities looked a lot like the trash exhibited at the Whitney. Of course music and art of quality are not hard to find in New York City, and that was the reason to be there, in spite of all the shameless hucksterism about Living Theater and Street Theater and "happenings," and all the rest of it. I preferred the New York where in 1960 I heard Mischa Elman and Benno Moiseiwitsch and Michael Rabin (soon to collapse) and, later, Vladimir Horowitz (soon to return) and Earl Wild (still with us).

So there it was, waiting to be "wrapped," as writers and critics attempted to do, or I should say, more than attempted. There was a battle of the Zeitgeist, as it were, as to who

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was going to wrap the 60's, to own it, to be it. I suppose that Norman Mailer did the most in that regard, and he had a critical or even conservative streak that lent him more strength than you might suppose. But if there is one figure who seemed for a while to be more memorable and defining, that man was Marshall McLuhan, if only for the 15 minutes he had apportioned to everyone—a thought to be annexed by Andy Warhol.

Looking back on the McLuhan phenomenon today, we might wonder what all the fuss was about. We must realize that there was always a gap between McLuhan the thinker, the critic, the expositor, on the one hand, and McLuhan the celebrity, on the other. McLuhan the celebrity became a name or handle or shorthand for vague ideas such as "the Global Village," the notion the television is a "cool," "tactile" medium, and so on. The mere recital of the McLuhan name was an incantation conjuring all sorts of indefinable gnosis: It was the mark of the in-crowd, but not for long.

We have to remember that Marshall McLuhan hardly received much critical support in his own context—even a former student and continuing friend such as Hugh Kenner was not ready to sign off on his high-handed and arbitrary formulations. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962); *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964); *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (1967); *War and Peace in the Global Village: An Inventory of Some Current Spastic Situations That Could Be Eliminated by More Feedforward* (1968)—these "books" received rough treatment from the likes of John Simon, Frank Kermode, Dwight Macdonald, and Christopher Ricks. But that didn't matter, for in the 60's, not much did. (Maybe it was all the marijuana.) What did matter was getting your name mentioned on *Laugh-In*—"What are you doin', Marshall McLuhan?" That one was hard to beat, but the scene in Woody Allen's *Annie Hall* (1977—the moment had long passed, but what a moment) in which Marshall McLuhan played himself refereeing a dispute in a line at the movie house to the confirmation of the fantasy of the protagonist was the ultimate triumph of the *innerleckshul* (as Flannery O'Connor put it) in the popular arts. Even so, a more telling bumper sticker made a subtler point, some years earlier: Marshall McLuhan Reads Books.

Disregarding McLuhan's erudition and his personal life (he was a Christian gentleman and a man of great appeal), his contribution must strike us today as problematical. We would have to notice first that his "myth" has been revealingly compared to both Marxism and Freudianism, as biblically modeled "falls" into division (the print-enforced division between head and heart, expelling us from Eden, childhood innocence, *etc.*, which split will be overcome by the dictatorship of the proletariat or the Global Village). There are various problems not only with his methods and their reckless expression, but even with his facts and sense of causal relations. Above all, as with Marx, there is a problem with his predictions.

The Global Village has not materialized in any McLuhanite sense, not even with all the effects of digitalization, the steamrolling of the global tweet culture, and the affected Kenyan sensibility of the President of the United States. The merger of television with satellite service and other communications devices has put paid to McLuhan's definition of "cool" and "tactile." If he ever meant anything more than "fuzzy," then high-definition TV has obliterated any distinction with film, which now has become downloadable for the home. Such a transformation is radical, all right, but it isn't a change of medium. If war has become a television show, so has everything else, so what's the difference? How was the primitive bliss of "cool" to be distinguished from Warholian alienation? And how could a medium unite the people, if it was constructed on the segmentation of the market? You watch your fantasy, and I'll watch mine.

McLuhan had no sense of what was coming—it's easy to say, because his future is now our past. The Global Village was supposed to be an interconnected world that shared a mental set, a commonality of feeling, and that's exactly what we don't have. The world-historical transformation of the distribution of the peoples of the world has no name; perhaps it will be called the Great Melting, or the Affirmation of Diversity, or whatever you like—but not the Global Village. After all, a tribe is not—cannot be, by definition—"diverse."

I would add that the digitalization of information and communication, altogether unforeseen by McLuhan, has had a deceptive impact on that human sensorium to which MM so often referred, that effect being the reason for universalizing the digitalization. Derived from military systems that incorporated surveillance, the internet is a snare that can be used to advantage, but with hidden costs. The "democratic" illusion of free speech destroys all authority except the governmental and corporate, as individual thought is reduced to the level of subliterate ranting. MM (and you know which MM I'm thinking of) declared to his credit, in a 1967 interview, that the practice implied by his theory was repellent: "I want observations, not agreement. And my own observations of our almost overwhelming cultural gradient toward the primitive or involvement of all the senses—is attended by complete personal distaste and dissatisfaction. I have no liking for it." Well, yes. But when the crowds in the Paris streets celebrated a World Cup win by singing a British rock song in English, something of the Global Village was demonstrated in all its spurious and empty ritualism: "We Are the Champions" is not much consolation when you don't have a country, a culture, or, apparently, a language. Only Sir Elton John was missing, to bless the miracle in his patented, bloated, and incompetent fashion.

To me the best treatment of the ideas of Marshall McLuhan remains David Cronenberg's 1983 horror flick, *Videodrome*. Yes, it is as dated by events as only a VHS portal can make it, but if ever there was a representation of the power of the medium, *Videodrome* is it. I don't think that there is any such fiction built from the ideas of Alvin Toffler, un-

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less we consider that all science fiction or dystopian vision is related, from *Frankenstein* and *1984* to *Minority Report*.

Born in 1928, Alvin Toffler is considerably younger than MM was, and he is still active as a futurologist and consultant. MM was co-opted by corporations, of course, and he provoked the foundation of the discipline of "media ecology." Toffler has turned his talents toward the exploration of the military future, and is, I suppose, perhaps the first and probably the leading "futurologist" in the world. *Future Shock* (1970) laid out a vision that was similar to the schema of MM, in that it depended on a mythic world history to give it a framework. *The Third Wave* (1980) forecast the digital age, the knowledge industry, and much that we have experienced of what the Global Village turned into. Toffler has gone on to become a guru of such notables as Bill Clinton, Newt Gingrich, and Ted Turner, as well as a distinguished adjunct at the National Defense University. What interests me most about Toffler is his creative if not corrupt waffle between the role of academic analyst and that of the hustling promoter who lately has been coauthoring books about the way to wealth, like some latterday Defoe or Franklin.

Toffler has no doubt been a better prophet than MM was, but he has also had a hand in reifying his own ideas, perhaps particularly in China, where he is acknowledged as a creator of the "new China." About China I am reluctant to comment, though I would say that the nation of China seems to be pursuing a course antagonistic to the interests of the country in which Toffler resides. But I will say that various brainstorms of Clinton, Gingrich, and Turner seem to show very much the influence of "futurology," which has the effect of detaching elected leaders (in the first two cases) from any sense of service or obligation and then releasing them to engage in narcissistic and tyrannical fantasy, like Chaplin's Great Dictator kicking his global balloon.

Perhaps we can comprehend why Toffler must be discreet in what he reveals of the global program everyone is supposed to get with. Writing books of ideological advocacy disguised as prophecy, while consulting with various governments and authorities engaged in planning the future, must be a stressful business. "Writing" a work such as *Revolutionary Wealth* would be a moneymaker and a relief from the cloak-and-dagger aspects of futurology. Toffler has recently been writing about the wealth to be developed in outer space, but I think his consulting fees are still earthbound. And since he has been so astute and so in touch with the emerging trends he both scripted and predicted, I have paid particular attention to his treatment of cloning. If I know anything by reading the telltale signs, cloning is near, and it is going to be big. I think that if we could just accept the blasphemy of cloning, then perhaps we could work a deal about some cloning cutouts—some specific no-no's. That's about the best to hope for, if you have traveled as I have, from a village to Greenwich Village to the Global Village to Future Shlock. ©

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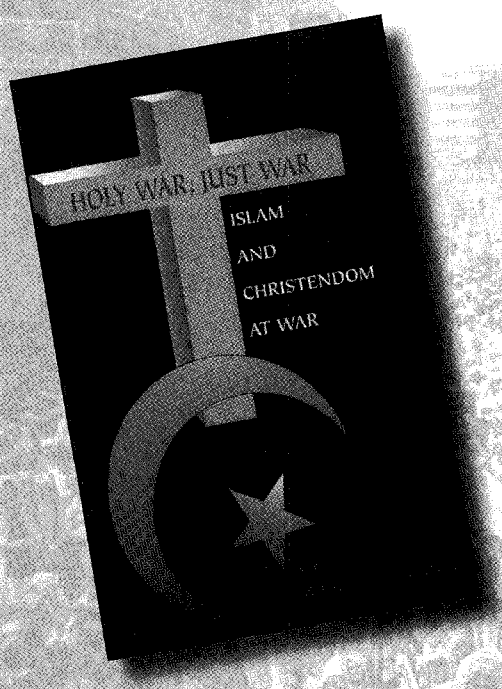

Holy War, Just War

Islam and Christendom at War

by Roberto de Mattei

"The term 'clash of civilizations' is not a palatable one in political and media circles," writes Roberto de Mattei, but it is the only proper framework for understanding how the fundamental theological differences between Christianity and Islam inform the way their adherents wage war. In this important work, he explains these differences with careful scholarship and defends with eloquence the "lawfulness of war against an enemy who is attacking the West, with the aim of establishing a moral and social order that is radically opposed to our history and tradition."

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How To Survive "Creative Destruction"

Clarifying Terms

by Greg Kaza

Melanie Anderson

The phrase "creative destruction" has become nearly ubiquitous in analyses of job losses in the domestic manufacturing sector or in states that once had a large industrial presence. A generation of market-based economists, conservative and libertarian alike, have routinely used it to defend the new economic *status quo* of fewer jobs and stagnant real-income growth. Yet the phrase, made famous by the Harvard economist Joseph A. Schumpeter (1883-1950) in his 1942 book, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, is one of the most misinterpreted terms of our time in the lexicon of economists.

Alan Greenspan referred to "creative destruction" more than a dozen times while he was chairman of the Federal Reserve. In a September 8, 1999, speech in Michigan, he argued,

> The quintessential manifestations of America's industrial might earlier this century—large steel mills, auto assembly plants, petrochemical complexes, and skyscrapers—have been replaced by a gross domestic product that has been downsized as ideas have replaced physical bulk and effort as creators of value. Today, economic value is best symbolized by exceedingly complex, miniaturized integrated circuits and the ideas—the software—that utilize them. Most of what we currently perceive as value and wealth is intellectual and impalpable. The American economy, clearly more than most, is in the grip of what the eminent Harvard professor Joseph Schumpeter many years ago called "creative destruction," the continuous process by which emerging technologies push out the old.

Greenspan, in a September 4, 1998, speech at the University of California, Berkeley, explained Schumpeter as follows:

> Capital equipment, production processes, financial and labor market infrastructure, and the whole panoply of private institutions that make up a market economy are always in a state of flux—in almost all cases evolving into more efficient regimes. The capital stock—the plant and equipment that facilitates our production of goods and services—can be viewed, with only a little exaggeration, as continuously being torn down and rebuilt.

In the U.S. manufacturing sector, there is plenty of tearing down, but precious little rebuilding. Manufacturing employment, the broadest indicator, peaked at 19.5 million in June 1979, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and has since declined by 41 percent.

Other Fed officials interpret Schumpeter to defend manufacturing losses. On May 11, 2000, Board of Governors Vice Chairman Roger W. Ferguson, Jr., told a forum

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in Ohio that

> Economic transformation has not come without cost. Between 1977 and 1987, U.S. industry reduced production jobs in manufacturing by 1.4 million workers. More than 200,000—or 15 percent—of those jobs were in Ohio. Of those job losses, over half were centered in two industries—primary metals manufacturing and industrial machinery manufacturing—each losing more than 50,000 jobs over the decade. . . . Schumpeter cautioned that economic policymakers who fail to appreciate the relationship between the relentless churning of the competitive environment and wealth creation will end up focusing their efforts on the methods and skills that are in decline. In so doing, they establish policies that are aimed at protecting weak, outdated technologies, and in the end, they slow the economy's march forward.

On December 4, 2008, syndicated columnist George Will wrote: "In recent years, in normal conditions, the economy has 'lost' tens of millions of jobs through capitalism's 'creative destruction' (Joseph Schumpeter's phrase). It also has created a few million more than that, which is why the destruction is creative." Will's argument is that total U.S. employment has expanded since the 1950's, a net gain despite losses from "creative destruction." On December 17, 2008, economist Thomas Sowell used the term to attack federal aid to automakers GM and Chrysler. "Creative destruction" means

> the replacement of businesses that have outlived their usefulness with businesses that carry technological and organizational creativity forward, raising standards of living in the process. Indeed, this is very much like what happened a hundred years ago, when that new technological wonder, the automobile, wreaked havoc on all the forms of transportation built up around horses.

It is easy to refute Will. Total employment has increased in every expansion since records were first kept early in the 20th century, but manufacturing employment, as noted, has contracted for three decades. Sowell, a true scholar and one-time Marxist who saw the light, should know better. Many paradoxes surround Schumpeter, a *bon vivant*, but none is greater than his conclusion that creative destruction means capitalism is doomed. "Can capitalism survive?" Schumpeter asked. "No. I do not think it can." You won't find that admission anywhere in the *oeuvre* of Greenspan and Will.

Schumpeter considered Marx, not Keynes, his great intellectual rival. Robert L. Heilbroner sets the stage in *The Worldly Philosophers* (1953):

> Schumpeter had studied Marx in his student days and had participated in seminar discussions with scholars such as Rudolph Hilferding and Otto Bauer, two of the most brilliant young Marxist scholars of their day. He was even more deeply familiar than any Western economist with Marx's work as it was then understood—much of that work did not appear in the Anglo-American world until the 1950s.

Schumpeter agreed that capitalism is doomed, but not for the reasons set forth by Marx, his main target in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. He dismissed stagnation, spreading monopolization, and other criticisms of capitalism, setting the stage, Heilbroner writes, "for what appears to be a direct refutation of Marx." Instead, Schumpeter produces a seeming contradiction: "Capitalism may be an economic success, but it is not a sociological success."

In Schumpeter's words,

> Capitalism creates a critical frame of mind which, after having destroyed the moral authority of so many other institutions, in the end turns against its own; the bourgeois finds to his amazement that the rationalist attitude does not stop at the credentials of kings and popes but goes on to attack private property and the whole scheme of bourgeois values.

The atmosphere has changed. Bureaucratic management, not the swashbuckling entrepreneur, emerges triumphant with a new employee class—bourgeois and infected with rationalism—becoming easy prey for the expanding welfare state that replaces *laissez-faire*. Schumpeter, Heilbroner observes, "has beaten Marx on his own ground." Schumpeter

> surrenders to Marx in what seems to be the crucial point of contention, namely whether capitalism can survive. But he has bested Marx by demonstrating—or at least arguing—that capitalism will give way to socialism for Schumpeter's reasons, not for Marx's! Marx is accorded every honor, but Schumpeter's view nonetheless carries the day.

If we want to survive creative destruction we must understand that the phrase does not mean what Greenspan & Co. or CNBC commentators say it does: that job losses are inevitable under market-based capitalism. Rather, creative destruction is part of a process that Schumpeter saw as ending in welfarism and a wooly-type socialist state akin to modern Sweden. Thus, the welfare state's expansion with each successive administration—Democratic or Republican—since the early 20th century is profound, yet lost on economists who misinterpret creative destruction.

Most families will not emerge as rugged Randian entrepreneurs in the wake of creative destruction. This is heresy to a post-Christian money culture that celebrates many myths, including the claim that every American can

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be a millionaire (although fewer than five percent of U.S. households actually have more than one million dollars in liquid assets, excluding their residences). Schumpeter celebrated the entrepreneur but would not prescribe entrepreneurship as the solution for laid-off workers. He did not view entrepreneurship as "a profession," as Heilbroner explains, "or a position that can be handed down from one generation to the next." We do not observe in the entrepreneur, Schumpeter wrote in *The Theory of Economic Development* (1911), "all those affective traits which are the glory of all other kinds of social leadership." The entrepreneur "has no cultural tradition or attitude to fall back on" and "moves about in society as an upstart." Many hear the siren song of entrepreneurism, but few, in Schumpeter's interpretation, earn validation in the marketplace's cash nexus. True, there are many examples of small-scale entrepreneurial responses to creative destruction—downsized manufacturing workers who find new jobs while farming part-time on the small plots they own; laid-off journalists who land on their ink-stained bottoms as paid bloggers; pink-slipped techies working on a project-by-project basis to write code or debug hardware. Unfortunately, these jobs often pay lower wages. Spouses are forced into the workplace to earn a second or third income to help buy the medical insurance that disappeared along with "30 & Out."

Few entrepreneurs create the large-scale entrepreneurial enterprises that employ thousands. According to Schumpeter, 25 percent of the population are so deficient in economic leadership that they are destined for mundane, repetitive jobs. Half ("practically all business people") possess normal skills of innovation. Entrepreneurs are an elite—"people who are a type characterised by supernormal qualities of intellect and will." Schumpeter himself did not qualify for this elite. He served as Austrian Finance Minister (1919) and, later, president of the private Biedermann Bank in Vienna that collapsed in 1924 after the German hyperinflation.

Ultimately, surviving creative destruction means finding alternative economic solutions. Some of these are based outside the United States. Several, examples of cooperative distributism, are worth noting because they embody Catholic social teaching.

The Antigonish movement, influenced by priests in Canada's Maritimes in the pre-war period, established a broad, successful network of credit unions and microfinance, partially in response to the Great Depression.

The Mondragón Co-operative Corporation, according to its website, "is the largest business corporation in the Basque Country and the seventh largest in Spain, as regards both sales and workforce." The enterprise traces its roots to the early 1940's and the vision of a Catholic priest, José María Arizmendiarrieta Madariaga (1915-76) who once observed that

> Nothing differentiates people as much as their respective attitudes to the circumstances in which they live. Those who opt to make history and change the course of events themselves have an advantage over those who decide to wait passively for the results of the change.

Mondragón does not view its system as an alternative to capitalism:

> We have no pretensions in this area. We simply believe that we have developed a way of making companies more human and participatory. It is an approach that, furthermore, fits in well with the latest and most advanced management models, which tend to place more value on workers themselves as the principal asset and source of competitive advantage of modern companies.

The firm describes its relationship with labor:

> In our co-operatives, employees may be members of a specific trade union on an individual basis, but there is no company-wide union representation, since as the workers are also the owners, the historical role played by trade unions in conventional companies is rendered redundant. Some of the typical functions of trade unions, such as those linked to the company's social policy, the supervision of working conditions and ensuring that the workforce is properly informed, etc. are carried out in our co-operatives by the Social Council, an internal body which is elected democratically by the General Assembly.

The firm's response to globalization has taken it from "25% of international sales achieved in the industrial area at the start of the 1990s to 58.2% in 2008." It has 73 production plants in 16 countries. Mondragón's industrial structure includes a consumer-goods component that produces domestic appliances—refrigerators, washing machines, ovens, and dishwashers. It enjoys "a position of leadership in Spain and France, with a growing presence in Eastern Europe." The capital-goods component is "Spain's leading machine tool manufacturer in metal cutting and sheet metal forming." The industrial-components sector "supplies components and assemblies" to automotive manufacturers.

Those who continue to misinterpret Schumpeter are unlikely to play a role in solving the problems left by "creative destruction." Families suffer when they are reliant on an expanding welfare state. They thrive in the long term when they establish means of consistent employment and self-reliance within a broader Christian community.

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Too Big To Fail

The Underlying Cause

by William J. Quirk

"We need radical change," Lord Turner, chairman of England's Financial Services Authority, said recently. "And parts of the financial services industries need to reflect deeply on their role in the economy, and to recommit to a focus on their essential social and economic functions, if they are to regain public trust." The British are engaged in an active debate on how to make sure Too Big To Fail bailouts never happen again, and that they do away with corporate-state capitalism in which profits are privatized while losses are socialized. In a capitalist system, the uncompromising hand of the market punishes bad decisions.

Lord Turner supports a plan to redesign the regulatory framework and revise the way the markets are supervised.

The Glass-Steagall Act, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1933, separated commercial banks (deposits and loans) from investment firms (trading and underwriting stocks). The socially useful functions consequently do not interact with, and cannot be infected by, the gambling that modern banks seem unable to resist. Congress and the Clinton administration repealed Glass-Steagall in 1999, and the banking system exploded nine years later.

Mervyn King, governor of the Bank of England, supports a Glass-Steagall-like separation of banks into "utilities" and "casinos." He would also shrink the size of the banks until they are small enough that we can let them fail.

The approaches favored by Lord Turner and Mervyn King are different, but both sides agree that something must be done now and that it is not enough to address the symptoms. Any solution requires uncovering the underlying causes and preventing them from happening again. The vigorous debate the British are having is, for the most part, not occurring in the United States. Our leaders seem largely satisfied with the *status quo*—let the big dogs eat. Over a year after the September 2008 collapse, no law has been changed, and the players behave as they did before. The Obama administration's "reform" proposals largely consist of reshuffling regulatory authority among the agencies that failed to protect the public last time. The banks, unimpressed by the proposed "reforms," have returned to business as usual. Lord Turner warned last month, "we must not forget what occurred last autumn. This was the worst crisis for 70 years—indeed potentially it could have been the worst in the history of market capitalism."

The Obama administration, while propping up Wall Street with $23 trillion in cash and commitments, used to say, "We are saving Wall Street so we can save Main Street." Well, Wall Street is doing very well, thank you. The *New York Times* headlined on October 17, "Big Players Find Clear Field To Take Risks." Two Wall Street giants, Goldman Sachs and JPMorgan Chase, posted record-breaking earnings of over three billion dollars in the third quarter. Just over a year ago, at the height of the financial crisis, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley became bank holding companies so, if necessary, they can borrow from the Fed. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has guaranteed $28 billion of Goldman bonds, which, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, will save Goldman $754 million in interest over the life of the bonds. The record earnings, only a year after we were told the banks were on the brink, will produce huge bonuses. Goldman Sachs, so far this year, has set aside $16 billion for bonuses—a sum that is expected to grow to $23 billion by the end of 2009.

Do the workers in our financial sector show many signs of Lord Turner's "need to reflect deeply"? Not so much. Goldman understands the bonuses upset the public. "We're aware of what's going on in the world," said Goldman CFO David Viniar, "but we have to trade that off with treating our people fairly." The 30,000 Goldman Sachs employees will earn an average of $765,000 in 2009. The country, helped by Wall Street, has developed a superrich upper class. The top 0.1 percent of taxpayers, about 141,000 in 2007, paid tax on an average income of $7.4 million.

Main Street, and the rest of the other 99.9 percent of the population, are not doing so well. The Obama administration has declared that what it calls the "recession" is over because of a 3.2 percent rise in GDP—later revised down to 2.8 percent—which was driven largely by a federal stimulus. The administration's declaration, however, has had little resonance in the country. The financial crisis struck an economy which had already been hollowed out by 20 years of globalism. Wages are the lowest in 29 years. About 23 percent (10.7 million) of U.S. homeowners owe more on their mortgages than their properties are

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William J. Quirk is the author of Courts & Congress. *Janek Kazmierski and Andrew deHoll, third-year law students, gave invaluable assistance in the preparation of this article.*

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worth. The October 2009 unemployment rate, topping 10 percent for the first time since 1983, was 10.2 percent. Getting laid off is a disaster not only for workers but for those who rely on them. October was the 22nd straight month of job losses—the longest run since the Great Depression. The same week that Goldman and JPMorgan announced their near-record earnings, 514,000 Americans filed for unemployment. One of every five families has a member who is unemployed. The official rate only counts those who have looked for a job in the last four weeks. The broad unemployment rate is 17.5 percent—counting the unemployed and underemployed—which is approaching the 25-percent levels we experienced in the Great Depression. The long-term unemployment rate—those unemployed for more than six months—is 36 percent of those unemployed. The Fed predicts the unemployment rate will stay around ten percent at least through 2010 and remain high after that. Approximately 7.6 million workers have been laid off over the past two years, and since we need 100,000 new jobs each month to keep up with population growth, we are now, according to Christina Romer, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, about 10 million jobs short. No one can see where they will come from.

Neil Barofsky, special inspector general for the Treasury's Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) was asked by CNN on October 21 what changes had been made to prevent a repeat of the September 2008 collapse:

> I think, actually, what's changed is in the other direction.
>
> These banks that were too big to fail are now bigger. Government has sponsored and supported several mergers that made them larger. And that guarantee—that implicit guarantee of moral hazard, the idea that the government is not going to let these—these banks fail, which was implicit a year ago, it's now explicit.
>
> So if anything, not only has there not been any meaningful regulatory reform to make it less likely, in a lot of ways, the governments have made such problems more likely. . . . Potentially, we could be in more danger now than we were a year ago.

Barofsky's concerns echo those of Depression-era senators who opposed centralizing the nation's credit into a handful of large banks. Congress, in enacting Glass-Steagall in 1933, made two basic decisions: first, that banking functions should be separated from investment functions; and second, that banking institutions should not be encouraged to grow. Sen. Carter Glass (D-VA), the former Treasury secretary and architect of the Fed, wanted not only to separate the functions but to encourage growth. He explained that diversity of resources would reduce risks:

> Senators know that we have in this country hundreds of 1-crop banks, so to speak. The diversity of their business is inappreciable; and if that one crop fails, the bank fails. That would not actually apply to a branch-banking system. A large bank in the cotton territory would be very much more apt to have a diversity of business than a weak bank in a small community of that territory; so that when the cotton crop fails in the far south, or the tobacco crop in Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky fails, it does not necessarily follow that the bank in the larger community, with larger resources, would fail, as so often now occurs with the small banks in small communities.
>
> Two fundamental causes are at the root of the small bank failures—lack of diversity and necessarily lack of earning power.

Congress, however, would not go along with Glass on encouraging bigger banks. Sen. Peter Norbeck (R-SD), chairman of the Senate Banking and Commerce Committee, feared the change would lead to giant national banks with satellite offices throughout the country. Power, he said, would "soon fall into very few hands, fall into central control." The country was feeling the widespread effects of small-bank failures. Would the impact not be stronger when a much larger bank toppled? Norbeck noted that

> It is in the interest of the United States that a banking monopoly should not be created. The theory of siphoning credits through a branch banking system has been exploded. Theoretically, it functions perfectly, until under pressure the pipe springs a leak. When a unit bank closes, there is merely a pop; when a system of branch banks closes, it is a detonation.

Congress agreed with Norbeck. Everyone understood, of course, that National City would remain a big bank, but it would not be Too Big To Fail. Since the functions were separated, there was less reason for it to fail. The country prospered under the Glass-Steagall strategy.

Under the Clinton administration, Congress reversed both parts of the original plan. First, in 1994 it passed the Riegle-Neal Interstate Banking and Branching Efficiency Act, which permitted national banks to acquire banks anywhere in the United States. Now, as Senator Norbeck warned in 1932, a bank failure would be a "detonation." Second, in 1999, it repealed Glass-Steagall's separation of banking from gambling functions. The country was now as vulnerable as it had been in 1929. And then the financial crisis came.

Has the financial sector grown far beyond what can be justified by its social benefit? Without doubt. Since the repeal of Glass-Steagall, the banks have become gambling casinos. Today, the biggest gamblers operate with government guarantees. They will keep any winnings, but the taxpayer will pick up all the losses.

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On October 20, Mervyn King noted in Edinburgh, "The massive support extended to the banking sector around the world, while necessary to avert economic disaster, has created possibly the biggest moral hazard in history." King recommends splitting the banks up and separating utility functions from "casinos"—exactly what Glass-Steagall did. Paul Volcker, who believes the banks should return to Glass-Steagall, has been ostracized by the Obama administration. The administration discourages dissenters. The world was less exciting under Glass-Steagall, but we never had a financial crisis.

The vigorous debate the British are having is, for the most part, not occurring in the United States. Our leaders seem largely satisfied with the *status quo*—let the big dogs eat.

Ben Bernanke, on October 23, was asked by the deputy governor of the Bank of England if he agreed with King that "casino" activities should be split off and bank size reduced until they are small enough that we can let them fail. Bernanke replied that he would prefer "a more subtle approach without losing the economic benefit of multifunctional international firms." In other words, the big banks need to stay big to compete globally—again, let the big dogs eat. Daniel K. Tarullo, an appointee of President Obama, called breaking up the banks "more a provocative idea than a proposal." Edward L. Yingling, president of the American Bankers Association, added that "you don't want to create a system that raises great uncertainty and changes what institutions, risk management executives and lawyers are used to." We certainly wouldn't want to do that.

"Why were banks willing to take risks that proved so damaging both to themselves and the rest of the economy?" asks King, before providing the answer:

> one of the key reasons—mentioned by market participants in conversations before the crisis hit—is that the incentives to manage risk and to increase leverage were distorted by the implicit support or guarantee provided by government to creditors of banks that were seen as "too important to fail."

The big banks could raise money more cheaply because of the *de facto* government guarantee. They had less incentive, as King puts it, to "guard against tail risk." The "banks and their creditors knew that if they were sufficiently important to the economy or the rest of the financial system, and things went wrong, the government would always stand behind them. And they were right."

The financial sector, according to Lord Turner, "has swollen beyond its socially useful size and seems to make excessively large profits." In the United States, from 1929 to 1988, financial-industry profits averaged 1.2 percent of GDP—and never went above 1.7 percent. In the 1990's, the figure started to shoot up, reaching a peak of 3.3 percent in 2005. It has now dropped but is still higher than it ever was before 1990. The industry, as it has swollen, has also become more concentrated. Henry Kaufman, in his new book, *The Road to Financial Reformation*, reports that our ten largest financial institutions today hold 60 percent of total financial assets, while in 1990 they held 10 percent, and our twenty largest hold 70 percent, up from just 12 percent in 1990.

When Goldman Sachs reports it won $100 million per day, that means another gambler lost $100 million. There is no net gain to the sector and, of course, none to the society. We must wonder what value someone who trades huge sums on miniscule changes in price adds to the economy. For example, one trader at a Citigroup oil-trading subsidiary earned $100 million for such trades. President Obama's Pay Czar objected to Citigroup paying what they owed, so Citigroup—caught between a legal obligation and the Pay Czar—punted. It sold off its profitable subsidiary.

The Too Big To Fail model encourages banks to gamble with vast sums of money to make enormous profits, with no fear for what will happen if the trades go bad. The government guarantees also support the banks' derivative dealers' business. The five biggest banks hold 97 percent of the more than $200 trillion in notional derivatives held by U.S. banks.

Lord Turner believes the big banks should be required to provide "living wills"—detailed instructions on how their operations can be wound down without taxpayer liability in the event of insolvency. The living will is supposed to ensure that losses will be imposed on investors and creditors, not taxpayers. "Now we may have to demand clarity of legal structure," he adds. Also, as King said, "It is hard to see how the existence of institutions that are 'too important to fail' is consistent with their being in the private sector." The line between public and private cannot be safely blurred, as the disastrous failures of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac should have taught us.

Our government's Too Big To Fail obligation goes on and on. Citibank, for example, was bust in the early 1980's because of improvident loans to less-developed countries so they could buy overpriced Arab oil. The Fed weakened capital and accounting requirements, allowing the busted bank to float along—exactly what is being done now. And Citibank has been saved several times since then. Next came Larry Summers' first bank bailout. In 1994, Mexico was bust with huge loans outstanding to the American banks. Congress refused to appropriate money for Mexico, so the Clinton administration, led by Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and his deputy, Summers, raided an emergency Treasury fund created by FDR to protect the value of the dollar. The Treasury paid Mexico, and Mexico paid Citigroup and the other banks. The bank's risk-taking escalates with each bailout. Citigroup is now

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34 percent owned by the taxpayers.

There are two solutions to Too Big To Fail. One will work, and one will not. The workable solution is to shrink the banks until, as King recommends, they are small enough that we can let them fail. He notes that "The sheer creative imagination of the financial sector to think up new ways of taking risk will in the end, I believe, force us to confront the 'too important to fail' question." The nonworkable solution is that proposed by the Obama administration and Barney Frank: higher capital requirements and more regulation. In other words, more of what has already failed miserably. The problem is that our government doesn't control the banks; the banks control our government. The pro-bank policies of the Bush and Obama administrations have been seamless—the same people and the same policies. Under existing law, our banks are the most heavily regulated industry in the world. But the rules haven't been enforced, and new ones won't be either.

Some Democrats argued that their party's proposed "reforms" were simply reauthorizing a system of "perpetual bailouts." Barney Frank and the Obama administration answered by drafting a provision borrowed from the environmental Superfund's polluter-pays approach. That, they said, would ensure that future losses would be paid by the banks, by making the big banks pay into a fund *up front* to cover any future failures. But the banks objected, and the provision has been changed to solicit contributions *after the event*. Anyone who thinks that provision will protect the taxpayers from another Too Big To Fail bailout is a potential customer for a bridge between Manhattan and Brooklyn.

Bernie Madoff single-handedly destroyed the theory that government can regulate even the most blatant crook. King notes, "The belief that appropriate regulation can ensure that speculative activities do not result in failures is a delusion." In *A Demon of Our Own Design* (2007), Richard Bookstaber, a hedge-fund veteran, explains why additional regulations will not work. "Trying to regulate a market entangled by complexity can lead to unintended consequences, compounding crises rather than extinguishing them because the safeguards add more complexity, which in turn feeds more failure." The regulators cannot keep up with the financial-product innovations—as we saw with derivatives.

Obama and his advisors don't have—or won't offer us—a theory of what exactly went wrong. They list a number of possible contributing factors: subprime mortgages leading to the housing bubble; the Fed's easy-money policy of making money available for good and bad projects; the reverse incentives created by securitization; incorporation of the investment-banking partnerships; slackness in the credit-rating agencies; huge bonuses that rewarded risk-taking; slack regulation by the SEC and bank regulators; and the unregulated market in the exotic and poorly understood derivatives. They all may have had something to do with it, but listing them doesn't explain how they triggered a collapse of the credit market.

In the Great Depression, Congress established the Pecora Commission, whose job was to examine banking practices, call CEOs to testify, and study data to determine the precise cause of the 1929 crash. The commission, after a year of investigation, released a comprehensive report that confirmed what Senator Glass already knew: "Undoubtedly, . . . one large part [of the Depression's causes] is that we do not require the separation of investment banking from commercial banking." Today's government, by contrast, has showered trillions on the banks without any curiosity about what caused the trouble.

The Obama administration has declared that what it calls the "recession" is over because of a 3.2 percent rise in GDP, which was driven largely by a federal stimulus. The administration's declaration, however, has had little resonance in the country. The financial crisis struck an economy which had already been hollowed out by 20 years of globalism. Wages are the lowest in 29 years. The October 2009 unemployment rate, topping 10 percent for the first time since 1983, was 10.2 percent.

The Bush-Obama version of a cure could be worse than the disease. They have piled up a perpetual debt—a debt so big that future generations, who had nothing to do with building it, can never pay it.

Can you cure a disease without knowing the cause? Well actually, yes, but at a minimum, you have to change your behavior.

If Glass-Steagall had not been repealed, the collapse could not have happened. Glass-Steagall intended "to provide for the safer and more effective use of the assets of banks, to regulate interbank control, to prevent the undue diversion of funds into speculative operations, and for other purposes." Section 16 of Glass-Steagall provided "nothing herein contained shall authorize the purchase by a national bank for its own account of any shares of stock of any corporation." Section 21 stated it "shall be unlawful for any person or firm issuing, underwriting, selling, or distributing stocks, bonds, debentures, notes, or other securities to engage at the same time to any extent whatever in the business of deposit banking." Mervyn King notes, "There are those who claim that such proposals are impractical. It is hard to see why."

As the story of the financial crisis unfolded, Wall Street's behavior seemed characterized by grotesque risk-taking, which seemed very hard to understand. But because the banks were playing with a government guarantee, their behavior was perfectly reasonable. ◁

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by Taki Theodoracopulos

Coming to America

A recent article in a glossy magazine about the rich and famous mentioned a $35 million house in Malibu, California, whose neighbors include Mel Gibson and Britney Spears. The owner of this mega-structure is one Teodoro Nguema Obiang, son of a man who goes by the same name.

Obiang Junior is 38 years old and is paid $4,000 per month back in the old country. He is obviously a man who counts his pennies, because he paid for the house in cash, as he did when purchasing a Gulfstream V jet for $38 million, four Ferraris for $1 million, two Rolls-Royce Phantoms at $350,000 each, two Maybach Mercedes at $350,000 each, and a couple of speedboats and a large yacht for prices unknown.

Not bad for a 38-year-old with a (very) limited education making 48,000 greenbacks per year. The man sure knows how to save. And spend. Mind you, we are living in a capitalist society, so why not? Teodoro's excesses might not be tolerated in today's economic climate, but he's no Wall Street executive. No Lloyd Blankfein he. He's not even a Bernie Madoff. What he is—yes, you guessed it, dear readers—is black, and better yet, a real, honest-to-goodness African. His father is Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mbasogo, president for life of Equatorial Guinea, and Junior is his agricultural and forestry minister. Equatorial Guinea is a small coastal African country with a population of 500,000, most of whom live well below the poverty line, and whose infant death rate is 93 percent, among the highest in the world. There is no clean water, and there are no health services. Simon Mann, an English mercenary recently pardoned by Teodoro Senior (for a large yacht, I presume) reported his fellow jailbirds eating insects and rats, although he, being a European, was given favored treatment—grass and bread crumbs.

How does Old Man Obiang manage to live in a grand palace, have billions in American banks, and be so generous with his penny-pinching son? That's as hard to answer as trying to guess why Goldman Sachs gave $500 million to help small businesses last month. Equatorial Guinea has undergone an oil boom in recent years, which—on paper—has produced the highest *per capita* income in Africa. But for some strange reason its people continue to drink foul water, eat insects and rats, and watch while 93 percent of their children die of malnutrition and lack of healthcare.

Although African apologists like the vile self-publicist Bono might accuse the people of being masochists, the facts are very simple. Obiang has stolen the whole kit and caboodle while the oil companies, those nice guys who charged us more for their gas while oil prices were plunging, are happy to deposit the moolah in banks such as Wachovia, Bank of America, and the Riggs Bank in Washington (which was fined $25 million back in 2004 for accepting Obiang funds).

Here's what Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, an otherwise pompous buffoon, had to say: "The fact that someone like Mr. Obiang continues to travel freely here suggests strongly that the State Department is not yet applying the law [regulating visas] as vigorously as Congress intended." And travel freely the Obiangs do. While their people starve, African crooks extort, steal, and use corrupt methods to export millions in the hundreds and thousands to greedy bankers in Europe and America. They use shell corporations and offshore accounts to launder the money, and although Uncle Sam is aware of what is going on, the oil lobbies are busy protecting the thieves. Many payments for oil and timber from Equatorial Guinea are made by Western corporations directly to Obiang. He also receives bribes and extortion payments from the oil companies.

When I asked a past commissioner of customs why the U.S. government is turning a blind eye and only concentrates on drugs, I was told that "people can go without cocaine, but not without oil." Worse is the fact that Junior routinely travels to the United States with over a million in cash on his person, which he fails to declare. A crime punishable by up to five years in the pokey, but Junior travels on a diplomatic passport, which I guess makes it OK.

Billions in Western aid go to poor African countries, but they never reach the poor. They go straight back to Western banks and into the greedy pockets of people like the Obiangs. President Bongo of Gabon, now resting in that sauna-like place below, had 15 enormous properties in France, 10 luxury cars, and 70 bank accounts. Young Teodoro obviously suffers from an inferiority complex to need such large cars and airplanes. My advice to him is to copy, say, Bill Kristol and John Podhoretz and have a penile-extension operation. Then purchase a mini. It might do wonders for his image.

But seriously. Equatorial Guinea has become the third-largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa, with revenues of about $4.8 billion per year. Surely the Obama administration can do something about this bum, as well as the rest of the crooks in Africa. No more African aid until they cough up the stolen loot, including the Malibu mansion, the jet, the yacht, and the eight cars. And a little time in some federal prison to teach Junior a lesson. But I won't be holding my breath.

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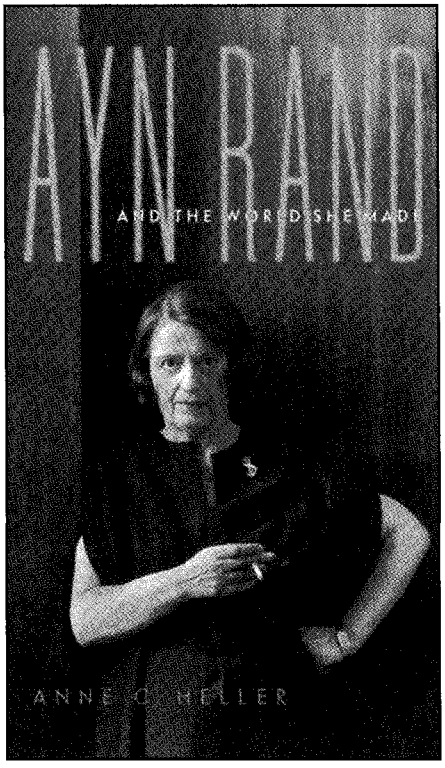
At the Crossroads

by Justin Raimondo

"No one is free save Jove."

—Aeschylus

Ayn Rand and the World She Made
by Anne C. Heller
New York: Nan A. Talese/Doubleday;
592 pp., $35.00



Melanie Anderson

Up until now, Ayn Rand hasn't had a biographer worthy of the name: only the memoirs of embittered ex-followers, or hagiographies written by devotees. Anne Heller's *Ayn Rand and the World She Made* remedies that lack. It's the first serious attempt to get behind the ideologue and catch a glimpse of the woman. Not that there aren't a few problems . . .

Born in Russia in 1905, Rand, the middle daughter of a well-to-do pharmacist, was swept up in the turmoil of the Bolshevik Revolution, and one of the persistent themes of Anne Heller's book is that this was the formative influence on her life and the development of her philosophy. While early experiences can have an outsized impact, Heller overplays this angle. For example, she tries to make the point that Rand's Jewish heritage made her an outsider in Russia, and that because pogroms were sweeping the country as she was enduring her difficult girlhood, her reaction to rampant Russian antisemitism was the genesis of her philosophical outlook and literary method, which elevated outsiders to the status of heroes. Yet Rand never said a word about such struggles, and the historical record tends to contradict Heller: The Whites led the pogroms, as the proportion of Jews in the Bolshevik Party was a mainstay of their propaganda. Yet Rand and her family fled to the White-held Crimea, only returning to St. Petersburg after the Soviet victory.

Heller, who had no access to the archive of materials jealously guarded by the Ayn Rand Institute, has nevertheless done her research. Her book describes Rand's youth in Russia with an impressive precision and attention to detail. Yet Heller tends to blow small incidents out of proportion. She describes an occasion when Rand's mother, a vain and difficult woman, denied her a midi blouse and forbade the drinking of tea, considered too adult for a child. From this, Heller concludes,

> The elaborate and controversial philosophical system she went on to create in her forties and fifties was, at its heart, an answer to this question ["Why won't they let me have what I want?"] and a memorialization of this project.

Rand was no more than five years old at the time—yet we are expected to believe that she developed an entire worldview out of this incident. Though Heller dots her book with similarly amateur psychological diagnoses, the effect is not fatally disfiguring: She does an excellent job of documenting Rand's early influences—including the decisive role played by her father—and shows how her unusually strong sense of self transcended the crumminess of revolutionary Russia and gave her the self-possession to defy the dreary spirit of the age.

Rand dreamed of going to Hollywood and writing for the movies, and once she managed to get out of Russia—just before the Iron Curtain fell—the movie industry was to be

Justin Raimondo is editorial director of Antiwar.com.

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her bread and butter until the success of *The Fountainhead* in 1943. She worked for Cecil B. DeMille and was hired by the wardrobe department of RKO—just in time for the stock-market crash of 1929. Rand considered herself lucky and drove herself—with that force of sheer will which animated her characters—churning out a steady stream of short stories and movie scripts that went unsold.

Rand was nothing if not persistent. Her first sale, "Red Pawn," tells the story of a woman who signs on to become the mistress of the commander of a Soviet prison because her husband is incarcerated therein. As the plot unfolds, the commander discovers the meaning of what it is to love something other than the proletariat. "Red Pawn" was never produced, but the money allowed her to quit the wardrobe department: She was now a full-time writer.

She found more success with a play, *The Night of January 16th*, a courtroom drama in which the jury was chosen from the audience. Based on the trial of Ivar Krueger, the Bernie Madoff of his time, the play manages to romanticize a con man who embodies the Nietzschean values that were still part of Rand's Russian baggage.

The same spirit pervades her first novel, *We the Living*—the story of one young woman's fight to preserve her soul against the soulless prison house of Soviet Russia. It is "Red Pawn" fleshed out, yet another romantic triad in which the girl rents herself to a Soviet official in order to save the man she loves. A friend sent her manuscript to H.L. Mencken, who liked it but warned an incredulous Rand that the anticommunist slant would make it virtually unpublishable. She could hardly believe the virus that had victimized her family in Russia had followed her to America.

We the Living, published in 1936, received a lot of attention for a first novel—which, as Heller points out, contradicts the starving-artist-overcomes-indifferent-world myth promulgated by Rand and her followers. Praised by the *Washington Post* and the *Herald Tribune*, panned by the pro-Soviet *New York Times* and *The Nation*, the novel made a name for her among conservatives.

It also made her a name among American leftists, who dominated Hollywood. When Rand sought work as a screenwriter, she ran into a brick wall. "She talks too much about Soviet Russia," one industry insider told her agent. Blacklisted, Rand stepped up her anticommunist activities, lecturing and giving interviews. Heller avers that this doomed her efforts to bring her family to America, and her correspondence with them ceased: She didn't want to endanger them.

A stage adaptation of *We the Living* and another play went nowhere, but Rand—who, in her journal, vowed to turn herself into "a writing machine"—was undeterred. She began the novel that was to make her famous: *The Fountainhead*.

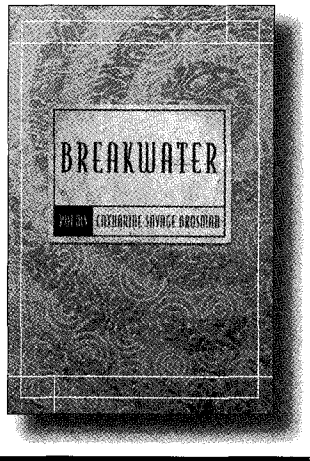
The Fountainhead is the story of an architect, Howard Roark (very loosely based on Frank Lloyd Wright), who wants to build his buildings his way. Here, again, Heller raises Rand's ethnicity to center stage, contending that Roark's psychology is a perfect reflection of "the Eastern European Jew"—an argument made no more convincing by repetition. Heller is on steadier ground when she drops the antisemitism trope and traces the distinctively Russian origins of the book, noting that

> in Roark-land, as in Russia, production is prized far more than its cousins accumulation, acquisition, and pleasure: no good character . . . wants anything material or relational for himself, and even the bad characters' deepest ambitions are spiritual.

Rand practiced what she preached. Her novel unfinished, and her money running out, she signed on as a volunteer for the presidential campaign of Wendell Willkie.

A more unlikely champion of Randian values could hardly be invented. Rand, however, insisted on projecting her values and ideas onto anyone who caught her fancy. She was, after all, a fiction writer. She threw herself into the campaign, speaking on street corners, and befriended Mencken, Albert Jay Nock, and other Old Right stalwarts. When Willkie lost and then went over to the New Deal, Rand and her *confrères* organized the "Associated Ex-Willkie Workers Against Willkie," an organization devoted to exposing the former candidate as a tool of the U.S. Communist Party. She decided it was time to form an organization

Breakwater: Poems



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dedicated to advocating a consistent defense of capitalism and individual rights and, in the process, met Isabel Paterson, book editor at the *New York Herald Tribune*. A committed libertarian with a reputation for prickliness, the widely read Paterson instructed the Russian émigré in American political theory and history, effectively Americanizing Rand's evolving philosophy. "She was clearly modifying her earlier Nietzschean belief of the native superiority of the best . . . relative to ordinary men, which permeates her writing of the 1920s and 1930s." Pointing to the first edition of *We the Living*, which is filled with Nietzschean turns of phrase cut from subsequent editions, Heller avers, "In America, heroes are made, not born." The mature Rand would emphatically agree.

Meanwhile, *The Fountainhead* still had not found a publisher, and Rand's agent was getting peevish: Maybe she needed to rethink the character of her main hero, who, the agent said, lacked internal conflict, the essential ingredient of a good fictional creation. Rand was horrified. Roark's stylized consistency was the whole point. The author-agent relationship ended.

In the spring of 1941 Rand was without literary representation and a job, *The Fountainhead* was unfinished, and her money was nearly gone. It was at this point that a savior appeared: Richard Mealand, head of Paramount's New York office. He and Paterson went to bat for *The Fountainhead*, and an editor at Bobbs-Merrill, Archibald Ogden, made the book his cause: When his boss vetoed it, Ogden threatened to resign, and a contract was signed. Rand engendered antagonism from the intellectuals but also inspired champions whose zeal made up for their lack of numbers.

The Fountainhead, an American classic, requires a plot summary no more than does *Huckleberry Finn*. Suffice it to say that the climax of the novel, in which Roark blows up his own building because its original design has been altered, limned the impact Rand made on the critics, and the public at large. In a typical review, Diana Trilling managed both to miss the point and to underscore her own incomprehension, writing in *The Nation* that *The Fountainhead* was written as "a glorification of that sternest of arts, architecture," likening it to communist-inspired "proletarian" novels and declaring that "anyone who is taken in by it deserves a stern lecture on paper rationing."

There were some good reviews, but initial sales were slow. In the fall of 1943, however, sales started to climb, and Bobbs-Merrill initiated a new publicity campaign. By the end of the year, the book had sold 100,000 copies, Warner Brothers had bought the movie rights, and Rand had been hired to write the screenplay. She and her husband moved to Hollywood, where she bought a house such as Roark might have built, designed by the modernist architect Richard Neutra.

She was at the top of her artistic form and had reached the pinnacle of success: Now began the descent into didacticism. Instead of turning to her next novel, she began work on a nonfiction presentation of her views, with the unpromising title *The Moral Basis of Individualism*. Heller informs us that "she found expository writing boring and difficult at this stage in her career," and the project was aborted. But was it?

Atlas Shrugged, her *magnum opus*, has all the elements of a thriller such as Rand might have written in her youth: drama, colorful characters, and the kind of tension that she had hoped to bring to her stage plays but never quite succeeded in achieving, except in novel form. It also features long philosophical speeches, including one that goes on for 50 pages, in which the hero starts with the axiom "A is A" and winds up his stem-winder justifying *laissez-faire* capitalism, going from metaphysics to epistemology to ethics and on to political economy along the way. Rand managed to get away with it, but just barely. At times, the dry didacticism nearly overwhelms the extravagant romanticism that is her hallmark as a writer in the tradition of Victor Hugo and Edmond Rostand. The Americanization of Ayn Rand, the shedding of her Nietzschean and Russian literary-intellectual roots, sent her on a path that would lead, in the end, to artistic sterility—the end of her career as a novelist, and the beginning of her career as a cultist.

She received thousands of fan letters, one of the most impressive from 19-year-old Nathan Blumenthal. They soon engaged in a correspondence, which led to a meeting—and the rest is tabloid history. I won't go into the details of the affair that ensued. The memoirs of the participants, including the caddish Branden (Blumenthal's adopted name) and his wife, Barbara, have told us more than anyone needs to know. These two latched onto Rand like leeches and encouraged her to create the cult of "Objectivism"—the somewhat crankish-sounding name she gave her philosophy. Her circle of older friends vanished, replaced by the youngsters of "the class of '43," mostly relatives and friends of the Brandens, who, after the publication of *Atlas*, started a lecture organization, a publishing house, a magazine, and even a theater company centered around Rand's ideas.

She never wrote another word of fiction. Instead, she devoted herself to "the world she made," as Heller's title suggests: a narrow, cramped, cult universe, from which she gradually excommunicated all but the most slavish.

A good half of Heller's book is devoted to the antics of many people who called themselves Rand's disciples, and they were nothing but trouble in the end. Rand should have remembered her Nietzsche:

> When Zarathustra had taken leave of the town to which his heart was attached . . . here followed him many people who called themselves his disciples, and kept him company. Thus came they to a crossroad. Then Zarathustra told them that he now wanted to go alone: for he was fond of going alone.

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The Body's Vest

by Jonathan Chaves

Shadow Box: Poems
by Fred Chappell
Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press; 96 pp., $17.95

◈

Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide.
—Andrew Marvell (1621-78),
"The Garden"

Browsing through the poetry section at Borders, I came upon a sole copy of a new book of poems by Fred Chappell, *Shadow Box*. I have been an admirer of Chappell's fiction for years, especially his novel *I Am One of You Forever* (1987), with its delightful, poignant, and sometimes hilarious reminiscences of a boyhood in the western mountains of North Carolina. I was aware of his poetry, too, although I had never delved seriously into it. The first thing I read, opening the volume at random, was this:

Buried in logic, what can you
find,
Shackled to flesh, what can you
see
About the madcap world be-
yond.
Of time's wild timeless mystery?

The poem is a "Duologue" between "*Spirit*" and "Mind," with the former's argument indicated in italics, and the latter's in regular print. Thus, this was a single poem consisting of two poems, one encased or embedded in the other.

Here, beyond question, is a milestone in American poetry. Although the Neo-Formalist movement has existed now for two or more decades—a desperately needed corrective to the formless, nihilistic blather passing for poetry in America—even this school has produced a great many works that, while formally polished, remain empty at their core. But in *Shadow Box*, Chappell has at once done something utterly new—giving us perfectly formed poems that often have a second perfectly formed poem ensconced within, thus matching or surpassing the intellectual brilliance and virtuosic craftsmanship of some of the Neo-Formalists—while simultaneously reviving certain characteristics of traditional poetry long absent from American letters. These include, primarily, a grounding in sanity—right reason and moral wisdom, as well as a use of poetry to delve where modes of writing merely derived from logic cannot go, into the human soul, level upon level; and on top of all of this, the use of imagery to convey a perfect mutual reflection of man and nature, of self and other, of body and soul.

Notwithstanding the unquestionable originality of Chappell's work in this book, one is reminded of certain beacons of poetic history. It would be unfair to suggest that Chappell is in any sense imitating these; it is rather the case that certain key currents in literature, long buried, are resurfacing with fresh creativity in his writing. He might be seen as a modern Metaphysical. The theologically informed poems included in the fourth and fifth sections—the "Duologue" mentioned above, and the "Two Latin Hymns," among them—conjure George Herbert (1593-1633). Never since Herbert has poetry so successfully channeled the lifeblood of Christianity, dogma, liturgy, and the vibrant life of prayer and confession.

Herbert's "Confession" opens with an image that anticipates the "shadow box" of Chappell's book title:

O what a cunning guest
Is this same grief! Within my
heart I made
Closets; and in them many a
chest;
And, like a master in my
trade,
In those chests, boxes; in each
box, a till:
Yet grief knows all, and enters
when he will.

And Chappell, in his "Process," one of the real masterpieces in the book, moves from "Secret" through "Confession" to "Absolution":

Confess: The secret that tears
your sleep, *shackles*
your spirit, and seals within it-
self, *as in*
a vault, its self-destroying proof,
denied
so often, is one you cannot keep
or silence.

Here, the text in regular type forms a rhyming poem within the nonrhyming poem: "The secret that tears your sleep, / and seals within itself, / its self-destroying proof, / is one you cannot keep." This itself is a perfect quatrain forming a kind of envoy—or counterenvoy—to the complete stanza. It is actually unfair to take this stanza out of the context of the full poem, but the latter is too long to quote here in its entirety. It suffices to note that both Herbert and Chappell, in their different modes, have captured the tormenting way in which self-delusion fails to block inner decay. Only confession will ultimately lead to absolution, and though we may not be surprised to find Herbert's devotion to truth in the 17th century, Chappell's in the year 2009—his hard-won poetic expression of true hope after despair—is beyond refreshing, almost miraculous:

Forget: *It has not buried your life*,
devoted
to defend *that which you most*
lived for; it struck
and yet *it could not break the core*
credo;
the tenets *of your heartfelt belief*
still stand.

In Chappell's more imagistic poems, another of the Metaphysicals, Marvell, is somehow evoked. Marvell, journeying along the razor's edge separating within from without, idea from entity, mind from sensual nature, in "The Garden" writes,

. . . [T]he mind, from pleasure
less,

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Withdraws into its happiness:
The mind, that ocean where
each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending
these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green
shade.

Chappell, in "Once, Something, Never," characterizes

a moment *something like a knothole* in a wall
of pine, *within the striate grain* an opening,
rupture *of the swift flow of days* which sped
unhalted, *that gave a placket glimpse* of happening
complete . . .

and speaks of "*the ever-yearning soul*" that

. . . has fed
upon what was only a presentiment
of something that was that never was at all.

But just as "something" may at times seem to point to nothing, what is apparently nothing can point to something. The apparently trivial often surprises us into an awareness of the transcendent. This is the territory where the masters of Chinese poetry reign supreme. For example, T'ang Dynasty poet Chang Chi (or Zhang Ji) has a poem called "River," in which this supreme image of transience, together with such ephemeral adjuncts as autumn light, flying birds, snowflakes, clouds, and mists, somehow mirrors the eternal. The following is my own translation, from my book, *Cloud Gate Song: The Verse of Tang Poet Zhang Ji*:

Shimmering, trembling at edge
of sandy wasteland;
Void and brilliant, entering distant sky.
The autumn light illuminates
forever,
And flocks of birds are boundless as they fly.
The river's force pulls clouds
across the vastness,
Its waves touch lightly snowflakes as they die.
Islets in the stream—hard to
discover:
Dark mists for ages of ages on
them lie.

American poets like Gary Snyder and his followers have, of course, striven to emulate Chinese nature poetry. Chappell does not; and yet in such poems as "Fireflies" or "Passage," he gives us what almost seems the product of an alchemist's beaker in which have been mixed elements of the English Metaphysicals and the Chinese poets. The fireflies "spiral *when they aspire*, with carefree ardor / busy, *to embrace a star* that draws them thence." And in "Passage," the reflected night sky is momentarily disturbed by the passage of a swimming muskrat:

Serenely *a muskrat noses through*
the lines
Of stars; *the cool reflective moon*
sways in
The water *that trembling languidly* but once
Now settles . . .

The American poet does what the Chinese poet would not do, perhaps because he did not need to: He takes us gently by the lapels, and insists that we pay attention.

Something has happened in the
world this night
Of rare consequence for some
time to come,
Whether or not it alters the final sum.

Something of rare consequence for American poetry has happened in this book. We are indebted to Fred Chappell, one of our few master writers, for the gift.

Jonathan Chaves is a professor of Chinese literature at George Washington University.

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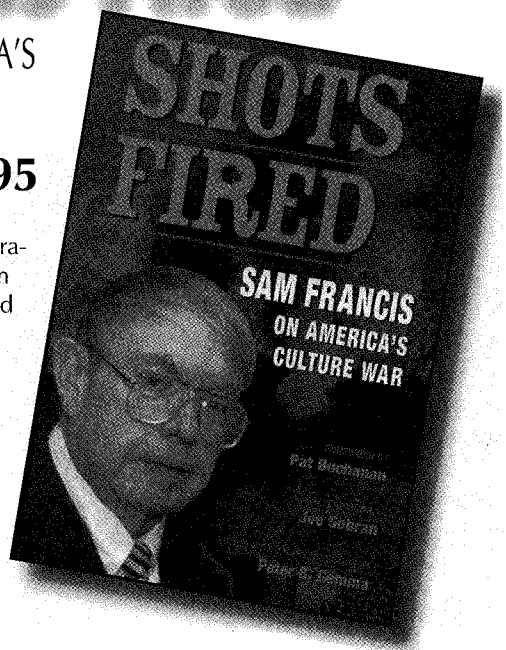

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Nestorius of Constantinople

by Daniel Larison

428 AD: An Ordinary Year at the End of the Roman Empire
by Giusto Traina
Princeton: Princeton University Press; 224 pp., $24.95

In *428 AD* [*sic*], Giusto Traina has written a brief and engaging overview of the Mediterranean and Near East in the early fifth century.

Traina, an ancient historian with a strong interest in classical Armenia, chose to survey the events of that year owing to its pivotal importance for the political and cultural history of Armenia, which was absorbed by Sasanian Persia and thereafter ceased to exist as an independent polity for four centuries. The year 428 is not a well-known date in traditional chronologies, so it does not carry the baggage attached to canonical dates of periodization. At a time when many historians have become much more interested in long-term trends and processes, Traina reminds the reader of the centrality of events to the study of any historical period.

One of Traina's objectives in this study is to demonstrate that the ancient Mediterranean world remained substantially united economically and culturally, despite the beginnings of political fragmentation in the Roman Empire. On the whole, he has succeeded, thanks to his synchronic approach and expansive coverage stretching from Mauretania to eastern Iran. By covering so much ground, Traina's chapters are necessarily vignettes, but they are generally well-drawn and insightful ones.

The book centers on the story of Nestorius, the headstrong and combative patriarch of Constantinople who traveled from Antioch to Constantinople in 428 to assume his new role. Several of the chapters trace his journey from the diocese of Oriens, which would later provide so many of Nestorius' most loyal defenders, to the imperial city and his relationship with the young emperor, Theodosius II. The legacy of Nestorius' successors in Persia, and regions farther east, forms both the chronological and organizational end of Traina's survey, capping an overview of a mostly Roman Mediterranean world with a glimpse of the history of its non-Roman Eastern Christian inheritors. If anything, Traina understates the importance of Nestorius' ascension to the patriarchal throne by merely alluding to the centuries of doctrinal controversy in the Roman Empire that would result from the backlash against Nestorius, beginning in 428.

While the book breaks with the conventions of much late-antique historiography by focusing intently on the events of a single year rather than emphasizing strong cultural continuities over centuries, it does not view the fifth-century Roman world with a jaundiced "declinist" eye. Even though he anticipates the political dismemberment of the Western empire in his discussions of Goths and Vandals, Traina does not describe Italy and North Africa in the 420's as mere preludes to the barbarian kingdoms they would shortly become, but as the important parts of the Roman world that they still were. However, fifth-century Gaul is deemed a "trial run" for the Middle Ages, portrayed by Traina through the gradual fusion of Gothic and Gallo-Roman populations and cultures already beginning to take shape and the introduction of Pachomian monasticism to the southern shores of Gaul at Lérins and Saint-Victor. Drawing on the success late-antique studies have had in paying attention to marginal and non-Roman cultures, Traina presents a more complete picture of Sasanian Persia than many longer monographs on the ancient Mediterranean offer.

Strangely, where Traina falters most is in his treatments of Nestorius' own doctrine, the nature of religious identity in late antiquity, and the relationship between Church and state in Byzantium. These mistakes reinforce conventional misunderstandings of Nestorius, late-antique Christianity, and the religious and political institutions that regulated them. While the absorption of the Armenian kingdom by Persia is the event that lent such significance to the year 428, Traina seems uninterested in the subsequent religious and cultural consequences of this dramatic political change.

Invariably, studies of Nestorius have been bound up with scholarship on his bitter rival, Cyril of Alexandria. Whether modern scholars have been sympathetic to Nestorius or largely critical, their interpretations have tended to fall into two broad categories: context and rehabilitation, on the one hand, and more orthodox, pro-Cyril accounts, on the other. What all these interpretations share, and what Traina's does not show, is considerable familiarity with both Nestorius' doctrine and the accusations leveled against it.

Traina's book also occasionally suffers from unfortunate anachronisms. Describing Egyptian Christianity's relationship to enduring pagan cults, Traina argues that Coptic Christians saw paganism as "essentially Greek culture and therefore foreign," and were thus "claiming a kind of national identity" by turning against it. Greek cults and Christianity were both equally non-Egyptian, but it is entirely misleading to think that late-antique Egyptians thought of a "national" identity in Traina's sense of the word. Indeed, it is no surprise that the Coptic word for pagan is *hellene*, because this was the meaning of the Greek word as it was used by the end of the fourth century, and it seems likely that the noun entered Coptic with that meaning attached to it. Elsewhere, Traina explains the partnership of Theodosius II and Nestorius by saying that "imperial conduct was already displaying the features of Byzantine caesaropapism," when it is now the general view of scholars that Byzantine emperors did not exercise such great authority over the Church as the word implies. On the contrary, there is now a consensus that the concept of caesaropapism is a pejorative, misleading one that does not correct-

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ly describe Church-state relations in Byzantium at any time.

The book's errors regarding Nestorius are the most puzzling, since Nestorius looms large throughout the narrative and occupies such an important place in the history of Traina's chosen year. It was also against the perceived errors of Nestorius that the Armenian Church, like the church in Alexandria, reacted so fiercely. As a result, after their acceptance of the rulings of the Council of Ephesus (431), Armenians defined their understanding of Christ in the most intensely anti-Nestorian terms possible, which, in turn, helped ensure that the Armenian Apostolic Church would remain at odds with the doctrine of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches until today. While Nestorius' legacy in the West was largely negative, it was scarcely less influential in shaping the cultural and intellectual landscape of Christendom, and so it is especially important for such a brief volume to state Nestorius' views as correctly and succinctly as possible.

According to Traina, Nestorius' rejection of the honorific *Theotokos* ("God-bearer") for the Virgin Mary derived from a belief that

> this term dangerously confused the divine nature of the Father with that of Christ: his mystic sensibility found repugnant and idolatrous the very idea that the divine Word could be incarnated in a baby.

This badly misstates what was at stake in the Nestorian controversy, and it gives Nestorius far less credit than even a heresiarch deserves. Every Christological dispute in the fifth century was an argument not over whether Christ was both true God and true man, which all parties theoretically accepted, but over how the faithful should understand the relationship between Christ's divinity and humanity. For all parties to the dispute, the Father's divine nature and Christ's divinity were the same; the question was how the assumed humanity related to the Son's divinity. Only after all these qualifications is it possible to say that Nestorius believed that the title *Theotokos* implied confusion.

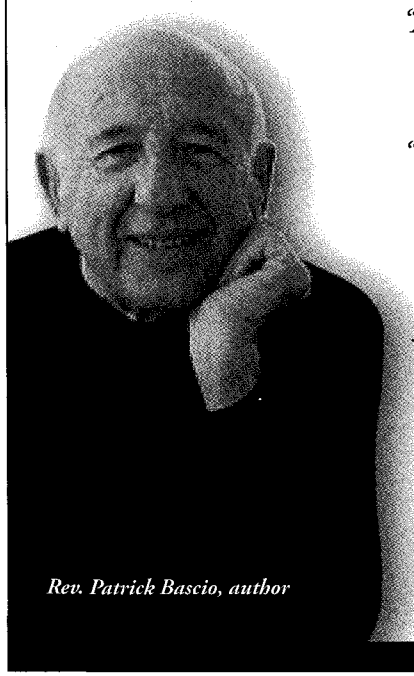
Nestorius did not deny that the Word became flesh, but he resisted calling the Virgin Mary *Theotokos* because he believed it was not fitting to say that God had been born. Nestorius' theological view derived from the strict application of the idea that each nature required its own hypostasis, which is to say its own concrete and substantive manifestation, and this required that complete humanity and divinity could be realized only in two distinct hypostases. This was still clearly heterodoxy in the eyes of the Church, but it was a far subtler heterodoxy than Traina's description suggests. The Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils condemned Nestorius and his most radical opponents, respectively, because their formulations were insufficiently balanced and precise enough to maintain the fullness of both natures and the integrity of their union in the person of Christ.

Nestorius belonged to the larger tradition that Jaroslav Pelikan referred to in his monumental history of Christian doctrine as the tradition of the "indwelling Logos" opposed to Cyril's tradition of hypostatic union. According to the latter, it was impossible to maintain that the Word had become flesh without being willing to say that God had been born in the Word's own flesh, which therefore made it appropriate to say that the Virgin Mary was truly, and not merely figuratively, the Mother of God. Contrary to Traina, the debate over the term *Theotokos* was far from being "a side issue"—it was both the occasion and the center of the controversy for all of the reasons just stated.

In spite of these problems, Traina has effectively captured a moment in fifth-century history and presented it in a way that will be rewarding for the general reader and the specialist.

Daniel Larison is a contributing editor and columnist for The American Conservative.

Unfettered immigration policy is harmful, dangerous, and wrong, says Fr. Patrick Bascio in his new book,
On the Immorality of Illegal Immigration: A Priest Poses An Alternative Christian View



Rev. Patrick Bascio, author

"A rare immigration enforcement voice in the Catholic clergy"
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On the Immorality of Illegal Immigration: A Priest Poses an Alternative Christian View **by Fr. Patrick Bascio (Author House 2009) 215 pages.**

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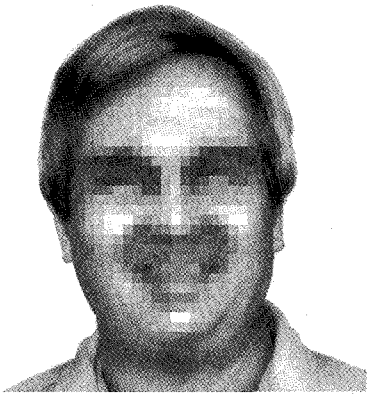
by Joe Ecclesia

The Peter Principle



All across America this Valentine's Day platoons of men will stand at the counters of flower shops and grocery stores, clutching cards, chocolates, and roses to their chests, tokens of affection for their wives and lady friends (and sometimes, no doubt, for both). Their dilatory homage to the patron saint of love always brings a smile to my face, for before my wife died I numbered myself among them, a comrade who several times remembered late in the day that his beloved ranked this feast of hearts behind only her birthday and our wedding anniversary.

February also brings Mardi Gras, or Carnival, that pre-Lenten festival whose etymology stems from the Latin *carne*, meaning meat or flesh. We in the West, and particularly in these United States, have made a fetish of this holiday, obsessed as we are with carnal desires and deeds. We celebrate Carnival not only on Fat Tuesday, nor for a week or so previous, but year-round. Christian reverence for the Incarnation pales at the obeisance paid by postmoderns to Eros and the senses. On the altars of their imaginations, in movies and television, and on 10,000 pornographic websites, these carniphiliacs worship lips, tongues, breasts, buttocks, legs, and genitalia. In mimicry of Saint Paul, they say, "So flesh, lust, and sex abide, but the greatest of these is sex."

Our 50-year-old sexual revolution has left us foundering. Our culture has demolished the old codes—chivalry, courtly and romantic love, Christian marriage—and has erected in their stead a perverse sexuality and a brutalized sense of personhood. The once-popular song "What's Love Got To Do With It?" might serve as the anthem for our hardened hearts. Sexting and hooking up are only the most recent manifestations of our debauched infatuations. Even among my students, many of whom hail from strong Christian families, this twisted carnality prevails. Students quote the New Testament, but listen to the same ugly rap music as their peers; they go to church three times per week, but grind-dance at their prom; they stoutly defend Christian morality, but practice secular sexual mores.

When confronted by this doctrine of desire and sex, the Catholic Church, progenitor of "Theology of the Body," blushes and blunders like a teenage boy fumbling at a cheerleader's brassiere. Lately, the Church's stammering and confusion has become my own. Last week, for instance, I met my friend Philip at the Bier Garden. "Caroline and I have gotten close," he said after our first round of Heinekens. "Maybe too close. We've done some things. Not everything. I mean, we haven't actually engaged in intercourse." With embarrassment he looked from me into the mirror behind the bar. "Man, I sound like a biology textbook. Anyway, I went to Confession last Saturday and told the priest. Not the details—I mean, he knew what I was saying without the particulars. Finally, I finished, and the first thing he asked me was 'Are you planning to marry this woman?' I told him I wasn't sure, but since then I've thought a lot about that question. What do you suppose he meant? Can Catholic couples sleep together if they're thinking about marriage?"

On another occasion, having grown loose with wine, a Protestant named Amanda told me, "I have this thing for bad boys, dependent guys, you know." Troubled by her promiscuity, and encouraged by a coworker, she attended a retreat at a convent. There she sought out a nun for counseling, one of those bulldog women who gave up a perfectly good habit to dress like a butch lesbian.

After Amanda had delineated her penchant for sex and men, the nun regarded her gravely. "Do you give these men pleasure?" she asked.

"I'm pretty sure I do," Amanda said. (I'm pretty sure she does too, Your Excellency.)

The nun asked, "Do you give them love?" Amanda nodded. "Do you give of yourself?" Amanda nodded again. The nun smiled and said, "Love is the key. You bring love to lonely souls. As long as your ideal is pleasure and comfort for them, there is no sin."

After telling me this story, Amanda added, "I'm ashamed to say I always thought Catholics were against f--king."

In yet another incident, Sam, a lukewarm Methodist, confided to me at a New Year's Day party that his Catholic girlfriend had laid down some ground rules between them. The essence of these regulations dictated that they might lie together naked as babes, caress each other, and even practice oral sex, but that intercourse was verboten until they became engaged. Sam then asked me if this convention was common practice among Catholics.

Your Excellency, I am confused. Is there some secret Catholic code of which I, a convert, am unaware? Did I miss something in the Catechism? Are some sexual acts permitted if marriage is in the offing? Was Philip's priest implying a sort of lockstep between sex and love on the march to matrimony? Are there hidden rules resembling the old baseball analogy? (Casually dating players may advance to first base; serious players may head for second; courting runners may round third; engaged couples go all the way.)

Please answer these questions as quickly as possible. My friends depend on your wisdom and expediency.

Joe Ecclesia

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by Scott P. Richert

Don't Stop Thinkin' About Tomorrow

At the 1992 Democratic National Convention, Bill Clinton adopted Fleetwood Mac's "Don't Stop (Thinkin' About Tomorrow)" as his unofficial theme song. Its bouncy, optimistic strains would be reflected in Clinton's line, four years later, that "We do not need to build a bridge to the past, we need to build a bridge to the future."

We know now that President Clinton's "bridge to the future" turned out to be more like Sarah Palin's "bridge to nowhere." From the approval of NAFTA in the first year of his administration to the repeal of the Glass-Steagall restrictions on banks in the final year, President Clinton set the stage for the destruction of American manufacturing and for the financial crisis that has effectively ended a century of American economic dominance.

Clinton had a little help from his friends, including Ronald Reagan, who first appointed Alan Greenspan as chairman of the Federal Reserve, replacing the strict monetarist Paul Volcker. Volcker had administered the necessary medicine to bring to an end the "stagflation" of the 1970's, but he was at best an agnostic when it came to deregulation, and the free-market ideologues in the Reagan administration saw deregulation as a key to future economic growth.

Measured purely in terms of Gross Domestic Product, they were right; but deregulation, outsourcing, offshoring, and the blurring of lines between traditional banks and investment houses forever changed the shape of the American economy. While GDP grew by leaps and bounds over the past 20 years, household income remained stagnant. A rising tide lifts all boats, but sometimes it smashes some of them on the rocks.

Within days of the Obama administration declaring in October that the recession had come to an end, the national unemployment rate rose to 10.2 percent, its highest level since April 1983. Here in Illinois, it jumped by 0.5 percent to 11 percent, its highest point since August 1983.

At the time of this writing, October numbers have yet to be released for areas within Illinois, but the Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area hit 15.2 percent in September; Winnebago County, 15.5; and Rockford, 17.2. It is not surprising that Rockford is outpacing the rest of the state and the nation. Demographics play an important role, but even more significant is the breakdown of job losses.

The United States has lost 2.1 million jobs in manufacturing since December 2007, 95,200 here in Illinois. Despite shedding as much as 25 percent of manufacturing jobs since 2001, Rockford remains a manufacturing town: 20 percent of all employment is in manufacturing, and another 20 percent is dependent on it. And even those manufacturers who have survived have found themselves squeezed by the credit crunch.

All is not doom and gloom, but the bright spots in the local economy do not augur well for the future. One manufacturer whose stock in trade is primarily after-market auto parts tells me that business is booming, but he is quick to note that he always does well when people cannot afford to purchase new automobiles.

If the economy continues to shed jobs at all levels, how can the recession have ended? As the old saying goes, *Figures don't lie, but liars figure*, and economists determine the end of a recession by positive growth in GDP. Government "stimulation" of the economy has halted the decline, but if such programs as "Cash for Clunkers" have not slowed the demand for after-market auto parts, the momentary rise in GDP is likely masking continued weakness in the economy.

Because the Bush and Obama bailouts have kept mortgage rates artificially low, housing starts have rebounded, up over ten percent. Illinois added 1,000 construction jobs in October, but that barely touches the 47,400 jobs lost in construction here since December 2007, much less the 1.7 million nationally. Next to manufacturing, construction has led national job loss in this recession.

It's no surprise that a nation that makes less and less—both manufactured products and personal income—is building less and less, too. Economists and politicians have become so focused on the big picture—the size of the economy—that they have forgotten a lesson that I learned long ago in the nature center at P.J. Hoffmaster State Park outside Muskegon, Michigan: Over time, a forest may grow and contract, but the most important changes take place as the composition of the forest changes. Once the white pines have been replaced by birches, the majestic pine forest is never coming back.

My neighbor and I may sell services to each other all year long, and the Gross Domestic Product will grow each time we hand the same money back and forth. But the wealth of the nation, not to mention our personal wealth, will never budge. True economic growth comes from the production of tangible goods, whether through manufacturing, construction, agriculture, or mining.

For several decades now, all of our political leaders have thought that they were thinking about tomorrow, when they were really only living for the moment. And now yesterday is truly gone, and tomorrow won't be better than before.

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Letter From the Classroom

by Carey Harrison

Mashie Niblicks of the World, Unite!

My charming, patient Post-War British Fiction-studying undergraduates are currently becalmed in the brackish waters of Lawrence Durrell's *Justine*, the first novel of his *Alexandria Quartet*. I say "brackish" because Mr. Durrell can scarce forbear to use the adjective when Alexandria's salt-sea breezes blow off the torpid waters of the port. *Torpid*—there's another word to conjure with. T.S. Eliot speaks in the *Four Quartets* of "the torpid driven on the wind," a phrase that was once a source of amusement to my fellow boarding-schoolers in Britain. In the school slang, junior boys were known as "torpids," and during our compulsory afternoon runs our "torpids" were often driven on the wind, much as Eliot states, around the gloomy hills of North London. Of course Eliot didn't mean Harrow schoolboys; he meant those-who-are-torpid or -listless, the febrile inhabitants of our godless cities and suburbs—but how many of his younger readers could possibly know the meaning of his chosen word?

Brackish is an adjective Durrell favored, like *tenebrous* (he shares this passion with William Faulkner) and *phosphorescent*. Lovely words, each one. I say my class and I are "becalmed" in Durrell's splendid if patchy masterwork, precisely because his language holds us up like so many weedy strands in a Sargasso of often turgid (nay, torpid) prose. We could glide swiftly forward, I suppose, on wings of ignorance, and simply ignore Durrell's vocabulary. But then why read him at all, when the poetic prose is the best part of the book? So we leave no verbal stone unturned. This involves very close reading, indeed; which in turn prompts much discussion of issues raised in and around the text; and I'm a happy teacher, imagining that I am uncorking for my class a rare wine that could be slugged back in half a dozen classes, or glasses, but which instead I am issuing in little sips and allowing to breathe so that its true bouquet can be savored. This is a joy for some members of the class, they tell me, but clearly an agony of tedium for others.

It all came to a head with the word *exiguous*. Every page of Durrell has three or four or more words of this kind, each one once a bloom in the posy of an author's vocabulary, but now dustier than a corsage from a pharaoh's tomb. Durrell's narrator speaks of his "exiguous earnings"; as I tried to explain, earnings were just the kind of item that begged for the word *exiguous*, while other archaic adjectives were drowning for lack of a convenient spar. Thank goodness for earnings! They could still be exiguous. They might be paltry, of course, or even modest. But *modest* was getting a ride to safety on many a noun, while in the growing dark, poor *paltry*, like *exiguous*, was learning to swim in ever rougher seas.

For my students, *exiguous* was the last straw. Why must they be subjected to such words? Why, if they must be subjected to them, must they have to understand them? Worse still, why should they waste time discovering their meaning—which I could be relied on to tell them, were it not for the fact that I made the students look up such words themselves—when these exiguous-words were not ones they would ever use themselves when writing or conversing or, indeed, would ever come across in literature of their own choosing?

In reply, I flee to images of pleasure: the wine, the aroma, the palate-tickling delight, even when sounded only in the silence of the mind, of a word like *exiguous*; then again, wasn't there a moral distinction, too, in the choice of this word? While *paltry*, a word deriving from *palte*, the Middle Low German for "rag," confessed the paltriness of your vocabulary as well as your earnings, *exiguous* declared that you were some sort of scholar, poorly treated by your employers but wearing the old school tie, as it were, of the Latinate. Exiguous earnings! Only someone who deserved better of the world could describe his modest salary this way. Exiguous! Such a bony word! The "egg" and the "zig" announced that you were skin and bone, lacking the fleshy earnings you deserved. What a word-arrow to have hidden in the quiver of your vocabulary, like a mashie-niblick in your golf bag!

A confession: I have no idea what a mashie-niblick is, but before the golfers among you hurry to enlighten me (assuming that a mashie-niblick is still in the quiver of your golfing vocabulary as it surely would have been, once upon a time), remember one thing. You don't need to. With a couple of keystrokes I'm at the helm of my Google-machine, which will tell me the answer at once. Ha! *Similar to a modern seven-iron* (whatever that is), *but with a loft more comparable to a nine-iron, the mashie-niblick is an archaic term* (ha! again) *for an obsolete, usually wooden-shanked golf club, in use between 1903 and 1941.*

All right—you didn't know the term yourself? Well, that's forgivable: It's obsolete. (In use between 1903 and 1941, indeed! What could have brought about so sudden a demise? It's a riddle comparable to the overnight disappearance of the dinosaurs.) A vanished term, then. But who—including nongolfers like me—can possibly forget the name of this dinosaur of a golf club, once they have seen it written? Or heard it spoken, I was going to say, except that you'd have to be around 70 to have heard someone say, "I think this calls for a mashie-niblick!" I suppose a younger person might have heard an older fellow-golfer say, "Now if only I had my old pre-war mashie-niblick!" More likely, if the word resonates in your head as

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it does in mine, you came across it in the pages of P.G. Wodehouse or some other humorist who couldn't resist the term, whether or not he'd ever set eyes on the real thing.

So here I am in the classroom with a history of falling in love with dinosaur words, and a rebellion on my hands. No more exiguous-ness! (Exiguity?) No more mashie-niblicks. It's time for language to square up and be a simple, transparent currency, a vehicle for meaning in all possible immediacy. But what of beauty? I cry (as usual). And I start to evoke for them the charmlessness of Esperanto, a language conceived as pure currency, pure immediacy. Ah, my dear students!—they are, after all, English students, and there is in their hearts a soft spot for beauty. A few hands are even raised in support of *exiguous*. Grudgingly, the rebels surrender their AK-47s and admit that they, too, are entertained by Durrell's vocabulary, even though to track every obsolete word to its lair means we won't even finish *Justine* by the end of the semester. Too bad, is my response; read it to the end yourselves, if you love it, and otherwise find a different book that you do love.

Behind the battle over bygone words and whether we should honor them or even try to resuscitate them lies, of course, a matter of simple human laziness. Who would walk to the well to fetch water, when he could turn on a faucet? Who would seek out a dictionary when he could locate a word like *mashie-niblick* without moving, with a few keystrokes? And shouldn't that make it easier, not harder, for obscure words to survive? But something interesting is happening in the realm of human laziness, or more precisely economy of effort. We don't need word-meanings as we need water; faucets will always be used, while we have faucets, and water running through them. But what do we need to know? If knowledge is as readily to hand as water, more readily indeed, why strap onto ourselves the water bottles of information we used to carry like so much extra RAM? And now the surprise: The effect of the internet, quite contrary to what we might at first have assumed, is not to add to our daily store, but to diminish it. There's so much we no longer need to carry. History, for instance. The steady disappearance of history as a feature of classroom study was noticeable even before the advent of the internet; for more than a generation now, chronology has not been considered all-important by art schools when teaching great works of art and their differing styles—these are now more often exhibited by theme, not period, in the classroom. Likewise in museums. History is a winding path; theme is easier to assimilate. And why do we need history? Whereas history was once manifestly identity, identity is now a kind of menu: Choose who you want to be, define yourself by what you like, who you would like to be, not where you come from. As for the threat that those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it, is this a threat, or a promise? In a world of postmodernity where history returns as kitsch, what isn't repetition? Chronology is vanishing from film study and even from literary studies, where undergraduates bounce back and forth among the centuries with so little regard for evolution that students may as well deem all artwork to be contemporaneous. All aboard for Planet Art! And now here is the internet—a product of our negation of history, or its coauthor?—to render all information equidistant, both from us and from any other items of information.

(Some forms of knowledge are still treasured, of course. A scrap of student conversation overheard this morning in our windy quad as I walked past: "I'm not putting that into my body unless I know . . ." I'm confident that it was the ingredients of foodstuff of which she was speaking rather than sexual intercourse. There is no end to American knowledge of the content of foodstuffs: narcissistic knowledge.)

So much for information, close to hand but unnecessary, for the most part, to handle. Wisdom, of course, is something else; schools have rarely claimed to offer wisdom certification. Nor do job descriptions mention wisdom. But don't we still pursue pleasure, at least? Is the pleasure of carrying around knowledge no longer one we rate or require? Enjoying knowledge is, after all, a largely solitary sport, open to rich and poor alike, a links sport played with mashie-niblicks on the reedy verges and eroding sands of history. Between each class, my students must look up six words, in the pages of Durrell's *Justine*, that they do not know. They have to type out and bring me the definitions. Judging from the frequency of their definitions, per page of Justine, I would guess that in Durrell's novel there are a thousand, perhaps several thousand words that have eroded, over the 50 years since the book's publication, into shapeless forms. How long before English itself turns into a kind of Esperanto, enlivened by acronyms and e-mail abbreviations, while only a monastic class, hunched over obsolete terms, cackle happily, undeterred by their exiguous earnings?

Predictably, we never finished Durrell's *Justine*, but we got far enough into it for the students to make an informed choice as to whether they wanted to continue reading it, on their own time. Since then a kind correspondent alerted me to Michael Wood's piece about Durrell in the January 1 issue of *The London Review of Books*. Wood's article is billed as a review of *Clea*, the last volume of the *Alexandria Quartet*, of which *Justine* is the opening volume. *Clea*, it must be said, is a perfectly dreadful book, even by the standard of the final book of a quartet. (I make an exception, though many would not, of *The Last Post*, the final volume of Ford Madox Ford's "Tietjens" quartet.) Why are the final volumes of novel-quartets so disappointing? It isn't just exhaustion of their material, or their author's appetite. *Romans-fleuve* are less subject to drastic decline.

Wood begins his *London Review* article with a spirited defense of adjectives, quoting Barthes to the effect that "at night, the adjectives come back." This is a sweet and silly observation, of the kind that kept the

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higher French criticism aloft for many years. (I believe it was last seen floating in the Hudson River.) It would be more nearly true to say that the night is dominated by the verb, architect of dreams. My correspondent points out that adjectives are under fire not only in grade-school English classes but in college creative-writing classes, and have been so ever since minimalism seized the throne. We don't have far to go to find the reason for this: The heart of the creative-writing course is the workshop, where short-story ethics rule, and not only because short is convenient. To expose a novel-in-progress, even to approving critiques, usually maims the secrecy in which narrative evolves. Better for workshoppers to lunch on completed stories, in draft. But what shall we say of short stories? What shall workshoppers ask of them? Surely not that they should be more ornate, in this day and age. Literary fashion forbids; the journalistic cast of contemporary thought forbids; the shorthand modes of contemporary communication forbid; utilitarianism forbids. No one wants to dwell, no one cares for the exquisite. Even wit is no longer required. Workshop culture concerns itself with slimming, as if it were a branch of the physical-beauty subculture. Literary aerobics! Who urges a fellow writer to fatten, to dilate? Go further, be wilder, indulge that vice until it blooms as a virtue, or dies of superfetation! This is not what we hear around the workshop table. "I'd like to know more about the sister," someone may suggest, but elaborate description is not what he has in mind. Adjectives, a slow-moving target, are indeed the first casualty on the front lines of contemporary style.

Of course, for the survival of adjectives, you have to have nouns worth adjectivalizing. Given the setting and subject matter of most contemporary fiction, I can do without adjectives as I can do without sauce on my hamburger. In the *Alexandria Quartet*, the outrageous tachiste palette of Durrell's adjectives derives less from a love of adjectives for their own sake than from the fact that at dusk Lake Mareotis is violet; that sherbet colors of orange, mauve, and apple green do dot the dust of Alexandria; and that such blazing ice-cream hues make sense as the color of kisses exchanged in that great "winepress of love," as our novelist calls the city.

Adjectives are novels in miniature: Each should be a surprise and, as such, a compression of all the tricks and twists the story has in store. Predictable adjectives tell of the death of imagination. And absence of adjectives? Well, it signals modernity, but does this mean we are a spartan literary culture, free of cant and frou-frou? Or readers in a hurry, snacking on fast-food prose that has migrated, in the past hundred years, from low-brow to high? With a pinch of holy water, like a baptismal blessing, from Gertrude Stein, *via* Hemingway's domesticated Stein.

Behind the battle over bygone words and whether we should honor them or even try to resuscitate them lies, of course, a matter of simple human laziness. Who would walk to the well to fetch water, when he could turn on a faucet?

And quickly: Why are the final volumes of tetralogies so feeble, so etiolated? The problem isn't that there's no more plot to be found, no more to be told. There's always more to be told. But does it relate, does it cohere? It can't just be more. Four is an interesting number, and an interesting shape. (Consider Chekhov's four-act structuring.) And here's the difficulty: A really excellent opening volume—Ford's *Some Do Not . . .* and Durrell's *Justine* are good examples—contains the remaining three volumes, by implication. This sounds promising, I know, as if all that remained for the author was to birth the remaining puppies. But every good narrative is attended by a bodyguard of possibilities—if you will, by all the possible contiguous narratives the author does not write, does not articulate, precisely so that they will couch the good narrative. They create the aura in which the good narrative sits. What happens to the sister? Will the next generation reclaim the old house? Will Uncle Wilfred ever get his due and his work be recognized? These are the questions that must not be answered, if the original narrative is to preserve its magic. Pursue each of those—give each of them its own novel—and there is a strange sense, shared by author and reader, of illuminating corners that formerly gave chiaroscuro, of nailing notes that once hovered above the melody. There are, of course, narrative strategies to avoid this. I must confess a preoccupation with this issue: Three volumes of a novel-quartet have been published, over a period of 15 years, and now a further ten years have passed while I battle with the fourth and final volume, of which I have twice written and discarded 300 pages. Perhaps with good luck one can stumble into a self-renewing foursome structure, or with cunning devise one. But the fascinating question remains: how to enable closure while still ensuring the ever-opening spirit of the long narrative?

Of course my other challenge is how to get through a long narrative in my undergraduate 20th-century fiction class. This coming semester, I'm teaching, in two separate classes, the empresses of 20th-century British writing: Virginia Woolf and Iris Murdoch. I shall take opposing extremes of method, and in one class take 14 weeks to read *To The Lighthouse* line by extraordinary line, with my undergrads, while in the same period, my poor dragooned graduates will be marched through eight, or perhaps nine of Dame Iris's labyrinthine constructs, so that we may consider each wonderful Murdochian confection as we would a page of Woolf. To each its own. I shall report.

Novelist and playwright Carey Harrison is a professor of English at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

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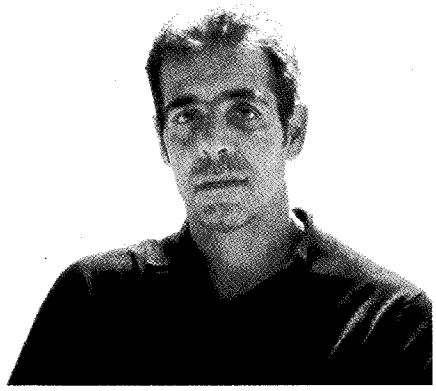
by Justin Raimondo

Muslim Problem



It isn't all that easy being a paleoconservative/libertarian as well as the editorial director of *Antiwar.com*. I would estimate that more than half of my readers and financial supporters are from the left side of the political spectrum, although there is a substantial libertarian contingent. The ideological overlap—a mutual opposition to our interventionist foreign policy, and a common desire to preserve the remnants of constitutional restraints on arbitrary government power—allows for peaceful coexistence in general terms, but occasionally the left-right alliance shows signs of fraying. One such instance occurred following a recent column in which I speculated that Maj. Nidal Hasan just might possibly be an agent of Al Qaeda, that he may have been inspired by them or even that he might have carried out his murderous attack on their orders.

The response from some of my readers was, in short, demented. Here it was, only a day or so after the Ft. Hood massacre, and already a Truther "explanation" was being floated. The whole thing was a set-up, you see, an "inside job," as the Truthers invariably phrase it. There was more than one shooter; no one could have fired that many rounds. The CIA was no doubt the real culprit, and it was all a plot to trigger a government roundup of Muslims and other supposed subversives.

I should say that these remarks came *via* the comment system on our website, which allows those who register to contribute their opinions to a "thread" attached to the main body of the article. Only the most motivated bother to register, however, and so we invariably have a disproportionate number of comments from fanatics of one sort or another. Most of my readers undoubtedly don't agree with these cranks, but still the response was a bit startling.

One blogger compared me to Pat Robertson, I kid you not, and averred that, like the Christian fundamentalist minister who had once called down hellfire on my hometown of San Francisco, I was stirring up "Islamophobia." It didn't matter that Major Hasan had been e-mailing Anwar al-Awlaki, a radical imam who had preached at a Virginia mosque frequented by two of the September 11 hijackers. Nor did Hasan's internet postings praising suicide bombers as heroes rather than terrorists, and his presentation to fellow officers railing against the injustice of what he sees as a war against Islam, seem to phase my critics in the least. Nor did any of this phase the FBI, which had intercepted his e-mails, and no doubt had received reports of his odd behavior—odd, that is, for a U.S. military officer assigned to counsel other soldiers recovering from the trauma of war.

These readers had already constructed a comforting narrative in their heads and were unwilling and perhaps unable to process anything that contradicted their preconceived notion of a counselor who had, in effect, "caught" post-traumatic stress disorder, the very affliction it was his job to ameliorate. According to this theory, the warfare-induced stress experienced by his patients had rubbed off on Hasan to such an extent that he went ballistic. When his religious fanaticism and expressed beliefs were revealed, the advocates of this theory didn't revise their opinion. Instead, they reviled me for stating the facts.

And the facts are these: Major Hasan was perfectly correct in stating that the United States is embarked on a war against Islam, and that no one who is a practicing Muslim can consider taking up arms against his fellows in this fight. All pieties to the effect that we're on the side of the "good" Muslims notwithstanding, the United States has been fighting what is essentially a religious war. Is it an accident that we're currently occupying two Muslim countries, and are threatening to make war on a third?

Of course, the September 11 attacks didn't have to be the first shot in a "clash of civilizations," as the famous phrase goes. We could have treated Osama bin Laden and his crew the same way we treated the Mafia and other criminal gangs from the land of my ancestors: not by invading Italy, but by targeting their leaders, tracking them down, and pursuing them relentlessly until they were all captured or killed.

Instead of treating Al Qaeda as a transnational criminal conspiracy, we acted as if it were a state and immediately launched an invasion—first, of Afghanistan; later, of Iraq. More than eight years later, Al Qaeda is still around, Bin Laden is sending us mocking messages, and the worldwide guerrilla insurgency aimed at humbling American power is bigger and deadlier than ever.

For years, opponents of endless military intervention in the Middle East have been warning that our actions will lead to "blowback," a term used by the CIA to indicate the old aphorism that "actions have consequences." If you go and bomb someone's village, killing his family members and coreligionists, he may someday pay you back in kind. That this blowback is coming not from the "Arab street" overseas but from the one right here at home is a variation that wasn't expected or predicted, specifically, but it is perfectly logical. There are millions of Muslims who are U.S. citizens, and it was inevitable that a small minority would see themselves as a fifth column embed-

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Instead of treating Al Qaeda as a transnational criminal conspiracy, we acted as if it were a state and immediately launched an invasion—first, of Afghanistan; later, of Iraq.

ded in the belly of the beast.

It was never in our interest to take on over a billion Muslims: One third of the earth's population is now our perceived enemy. There are only two groups that benefit from this, and the first is Al Qaeda, whose adherents see their worldview confirmed every day on the battlefields of Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Pakistan. The second is the neoconservatives, whose preferred policy of perpetual war is ensured for the next decade or so, and whose solidarity with Israel is faithfully reflected in America's unconditional support for whatever course Tel Aviv deems desirable. Like Israel, America is besieged by Muslims, and this suits the Israel Lobby just fine.

The horror of my left-liberal readers at the arrival of blowback in the form of Major Hasan is understandable, but the denial of reality is self-defeating and, as I have shown, self-contradictory. You can't say a "civilizational" war is a bad idea because we're not prepared to accept the consequences, and then, when the war commences, refuse to accept the consequences. We do indeed have a "Muslim problem" in this country as a direct result of our crazed foreign policy. That is the lesson of the Ft. Hood massacre, and denial won't get us anywhere.

Under these circumstances, it is perfectly logical to consider the proposal to ban all Muslims from the Armed Forces—and the police, and the National Guard, and, indeed, from any position in which the security of the nation's essential infrastructure is at stake. Access to nuclear-power plants, electrical grids, and vital computer networks—if we are going to continue to occupy Muslim countries and wage war from Iraq to Pakistan, then all these areas, where the possibility of sabotage is all too real, must be Muslim-free zones.

Massive surveillance, routine intrusions into our privacy, a religious test for military service and entry into security-sensitive jobs—all these outrageous violations of individual rights and common decency are the price of intervention. Liberals worry about the loss of a multicultural society, but, in refusing to take their own rhetoric seriously, what they fail to see is the increasing likelihood of a totalitarian society. They also routinely discount the effectiveness of Al Qaeda inside the United States at their peril: Another attack on the scale of September 11 would effectively lead to the *de facto* abolition of the Constitution, the disappearance of liberalism, and the end of any hope that we can rein in our rulers in their quest to dash the American ship of state on the rocky shoals of empire.

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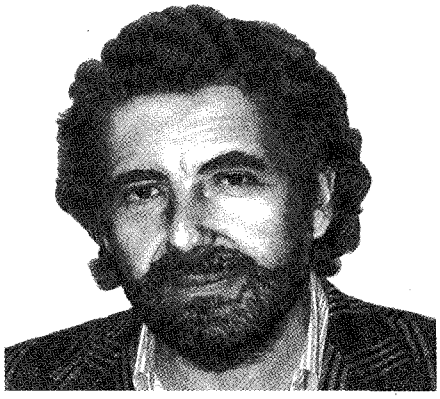
by Andrei Navrozov

A Chat With a Cabdriver



Britain was tense last October when the BBC announced that Nick Griffin, head of the British National Party, would be interviewed on one of its programs. *They's fightin' again at the BBC*, said a London cabdriver. It was front-page news for two weeks before the interview, and what began on the morning after could only be described as an orgy of recrimination. Needless to say, neither the poor hacks writing the news articles, nor any of the righteous grandees on the op-ed pages, deigned to take up any of the issues Griffin said he wants to debate. Almost the entire stream of verbiage was directed at one issue—namely, why should an extremist be allowed to make his point on the box?

As nobody wants to talk substance with Le Pen in France, nobody wants to talk substance with Griffin in Britain. It's nothing personal, of course, because nobody wants to talk substance with the UK Independence Party, either. UKIP shares some positions with the BNP—notably on Europe and on immigration—yet its reticence on the subject of white supremacy does not save it from sharing the extremist status of the BNP, and it remains a fellow pariah. Voters simply have no time for any but the three major parties in Parliament, and the journalists are only too happy to follow the voters.

After the program was aired, however, an opinion poll found that 22 percent of Britons would "seriously consider" voting for the BNP. Moreover, while the BBC received 114 complaints from those aggrieved by the appearance of Griffin, 243 viewers wrote to complain that the BNP leader was not treated fairly during the interview. But instead of making the press engage Griffin on the issues, it only made the media moan more loudly about the platform of legitimacy that had been given to a racist extremist.

Under the cloak of all the brouhaha an extraordinary event passed unnoticed. On October 15 an evening newspaper reported on page ten of its urban-news roundup that the BNP had lost its legal battle with the government's Equality and Human Rights Commission, and that by the order of the court it had ten days "to amend its constitution to ensure that its membership rules no longer discriminate on the grounds of race." Not a single mainstream paper has picked up the story.

By the BNP's original rules, only "indigenous Caucasians" could become members. *Well, them's fascists, innit?* Now the party would have to admit, not to put too fine a point on it, "wogs"—who in Britain, incidentally, "begin at Calais" and include people of Caribbean and Asian origin who, to my own cosmopolitan eye, would not look out of place on a golf course in Connecticut—those same wogs, in short, whose uncontrolled immigration into Britain the party defines itself by opposing. Lest the reader think that British justice isn't blind, however, I should mention that a week later the trustees of the Jewish Free School were in court under the Race Relations Act, trying to prove that the private school had the right to reject a boy whose father is a Jew and whose mother has converted to Judaism. *Well, them's Jews, guv, they oughta know!* But if fascists can't decide who can be a fascist, why should Jews be able to decide who's Jewish?

Another week passed by, and a man called Andrew Neather, "former adviser to Straw, Blair and David Blunkett," opened his big mouth to say that "at secret meetings during the summer of 2000" Labour ministers agreed that uncontrolled "mass immigration into the country" was strategically the surest way to retain Labour's hold on power, with the added tactical advantage that this would allow them to "rub the right's nose in diversity and render their arguments [against multiculturalism] out of date." Nobody bothered, however, to poll the electorate in the wake of this revelation. Was it still 22 percent? Or was it now 33 percent, as in the Reichstag?

Finally, come November, it was the Conservatives' turn to show their mettle, as David Cameron reneged on the promise by which his party had been defined from the moment he had taken charge of it—namely, the referendum on Europe. The Lisbon Treaty has been signed, he said, so what's the point? The train has left the station! *That it has, guv.*

Nobody bothered to remind David Cameron that within living memory, in Germany, there was a man with whom nobody wanted to talk substance, able to smash a treaty whose oppressive provisions nobody wanted to discuss, who stopped the train that had left the station just like this one. Nobody bothered to remind the BBC that when, of the major three parties in Parliament, one so spectacularly betrays the electorate on immigration, another, no less spectacularly, betrays it on membership in the European superstate, and the third keeps spectacularly mum, perhaps it is time to debate with extremists—rather than debate debating with them. And nobody bothered to remind the newspaper editors that, if blacks are invited to join the Ku Klux Klan and rabbis aren't allowed to decide who's a poor Jew, there is sure to step forward a man who will make sense of all the nonsense—at least in the eyes of some of their readers.

You've got a point there, guv, said the cabdriver. ◁

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MUSIC

Bob Dylan

by Christopher Sandford

Bob Dylan, like many of those in the lively arts, frequently urges us to admire his present work rather than to dwell on his past triumphs, although he has been known to make an exception to the rule when it comes time to release his latest greatest-hits package. Unlike some rock-music critics, I'm happy to oblige Mr. Dylan and acknowledge what is, at the time of this writing, his most recent commercial offering. Entitled *Christmas in the Heart*, it's a collection of 15 seasonal songs so uniformly awful that one begins to wonder if, like a marginally less-abrasive version of Don Rickles, Dylan may actually take delight in abusing the people who pay money to listen to him. (This is the moment also to acknowledge that the artist's royalties from *Christmas in the Heart* continue to be donated to the World Food Program, and a variety of other worthy hunger-relief charities.) The sound of pop music's most fabulously discordant voice groaning its way through "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" would appear to be just the latest stylistic departure for a man who has already adopted a disastrous, faux-Elvis rhinestone wardrobe and become a shill for Victoria's Secret, among other recent career follies. The only redeeming parts of *Christmas in the Heart* are the occasions when Dylan declines to sing and gives over the performance to a band and choir, and even then some of the tunes barely stumble to their finish. At a time when few of us are on long-term contracts and no one has a job for life, except pop stars who can go on churning out records and playing the nostalgia circuit until they drop, this would appear to be the work of a man who has long since ceased to worry about what his audience thinks of him. Dylan's career has always been peppered with "genre experiments," if you will, from rock to country, folk, gospel, and blues, with frequent excursions to the world of old-fashioned vaudeville, a stylistic melee that at one time or another over the years has exasperated even the most forgiving of his fans. But where has it all led? It's one thing to eschew consistency for challenging new work, but for *Christmas in the Heart*? Surely all but the masochistic will wish to spare themselves the ordeal of listening to the album, and instead make a donation directly to their nearest food bank.

After a fallow 20 years or so, Dylan's latest career resurgence appears to have begun in 1997, when he was hospitalized with a life-threatening heart condition. The realization that he was mortal like the rest of us was followed by his release of an unexpectedly good album. *Time Out of Mind*'s sales of a million or so may seem less than overwhelming when compared with the numbers routinely racked up by his greatest hits, but it was enough to win Dylan a Grammy and to paste his face onto the covers of both *Time* and *Newsweek*. As happens to most artists who endure long enough, it was critical-reappraisal time. Before long, Dylan would climb into an ill-fitting tux to accept an Oscar for his song "Things Have Changed" from the otherwise forgettable film *Wonder Boys*. (The statuette tours with him, presiding over shows while perched on an amplifier.) Dylan then had the perhaps morbid good luck to release yet another album—his 45th—on September 11, 2001. Entitled *Love and Theft*, it appears to have been seized upon as a form of musically assisted therapy in those troubled days, because, objectively speaking, little else about it would have warranted its glowing reviews. The music essentially recalls Al Jolson and the golden age of burlesque as much as it taps into the rhythms of modern pop. As for the words, Dylan keeps it light: There are one or two of those great country, broken-heart choruses, and of course it's always a thrill to hear the Conscience of a Generation casually advise a mate, as he does in the song "High Water," "Jump into the wagon, love / Throw your panties overboard."

The Dylan backstory can be quickly recalled. Born Robert Allen Zimmerman on May 24, 1941, to a middle-class Jewish family in the port town of Duluth, Minnesota, he was to fall under the influence of the folk artist Woody Guthrie and then drift across the country to begin singing and playing the guitar in Greenwich Village coffee bars. In September 1961 Dylan gained public recognition when Robert Shelton of the *New York Times* wrote,

> His clothes may need a bit of tailoring, but when he works his guitar, harmonica, or piano and composes new songs faster than he can remember them, there is no doubt that he is bursting at the seams with talent.

The breakthrough album was called *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, and it, too, emerged at a time of profound national trauma: Released in June 1963 to initially modest sales, it would enter the *Billboard* chart, eventually reaching No. 22, in the weeks immediately following that November's events in Dallas. It's admittedly unlikely that many young Americans consciously decided to drive out to their local shopping mart to buy the album because of its supposed allegorical insights into their culture. But it would be fair to say that Dylan's songs, "Blowin' in the Wind" prominent among them, struck a chord at a time when many people, in all walks of society, were struggling to come to terms with the murder of their charismatic young president. There was, too, the joyous derangement of Dylan's up-tempo songs, with their combination of a propulsive beat and mildly subversive, sub-Lewis Car-

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roll wordplay.

And that voice. Incredible. Those of us who ply a trade writing about pop music soon come to terms with the fact that many or most of its leading practitioners fall some way short of real virtuosity, but, even so, Dylan was something special. The critic Lester Bangs perhaps expressed it best when he wrote that it "was as if sandpaper could sing." Though not quite as ravaged-sounding as he is today, Dylan already favored a catarrhal rattle that could make babies burst into tears and the family dog leap up and begin frenziedly gnawing its own tail. What other generation (besides, that is, the present one) has so wallowed in such gratuitously offensive noise? One can only sadly concur with the CBS Records salesman who, on first hearing Dylan's voice, was to convey publicly an opinion privately shared by several of his colleagues. "It's a load of sh-t," he concluded.

Although Dylan himself, perhaps wisely, has discouraged the intense scrutiny of his lyrics, no such restraint would be shown by the various paying listeners, critics, and academics who greeted him as the latest all-knowing "youth spokesman" to appear over the horizon. Perhaps the most obvious example of this last sect is the now 76-year-old Sir Christopher Ricks, the British-born professor of humanities at Boston University, who has written a number of erudite books and essays seeking to elevate "the voice of the Twentieth Century" to canonical status alongside Tennyson, Shakespeare, and Milton. In nearly every Dylan song, Ricks finds either "explicit correspondence" to or "structural echoes" of the work of other poets. Thus, the 1969 single "Lay, Lady, Lay," a slight if untypically warm tune comprised of a recurring four-note guitar phrase, becomes an exercise in what Ricks terms "erotolayladylaylia," whose roots he traces to John Donne's poetic undressing of his partner, "Elegy XIX: To His Mistress Going to Bed." Similarly, Dylan's sing-along anthem "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" (which its composer later conceded had nothing whatever to do with nuclear fallout, but was about "the lies people get told on their radios and in their newspapers") becomes an elegiac variation on the 17th-century Anglo-Scottish ballad "Lord Randall." Or take Dylan's critically fêted 1973 air "Knockin' on Heaven's Door," which has spawned upward of 70 cover versions, and is said (though not specifically by Ricks) to represent a "mystical insight" into the beyond. The song consists of two four-line verses and a similarly brief chorus. The first line of the chorus is: "Knock, knock, knockin' on heaven's door." Those are also the second, third, and fourth lines. A minute later, Dylan then repeats the entire refrain, which concludes the mystical insight. "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" reached No. 12 on the *Billboard* singles chart and was recently featured prominently in *Rolling Stone*'s "500 Greatest Songs of all Time." One could go on. It's worth dwelling on Professor Ricks, a man of many other sterling qualities, if only to illustrate the widespread infatuation with the banal and sordid that seemed to seize many of the West's places of higher education around 1962, and which shows no sign of abating some 50 years later.

While the morbid condition we might term Dylanitis goes unchecked, Dylan himself continues to appear on almost any stage that will host him, gasping out a variety of the lyrics he wrote as a young man in the early days of the Johnson administration. It would hardly matter were he instead to recite the Republican Party manifesto, because his words are invariably lost in a cyclotron of nostalgic abandon on one side of the footlights, and amplified guitar on the other. The rock-concert audience is almost infinitely forgiving. It requires to see and hear only the vaguest facsimile of the original records it associates with adolescent memories of dating, dancing, and more. The crowds come to be pleasured, and you can feel them willing the show on. Technical expertise is not mandatory, which may account for the self-loathing that appears to afflict so many rock stars; they know how far short of their hopes the performance invariably falls.

In Dylan's case there are additional calls on the audience's indulgence. The old songs are regularly given new tempos and arrangements, and are often unrecognizable until you hear the chorus, if even then. The new songs are indecipherable. There are no video screens or flares or lasers, or any of the other standard rock-concert accessories. As a rule, you will get more bang for your buck elsewhere. I still acutely remember a night in June 1989 when my wife and I paid to sit in two plastic seats in the upper reaches of London's Wembley Arena, from which we watched Dylan perform on what was billed prematurely as his "last ever" tour. He stood toward the side of the stage, appearing to us as a black dot, eschewed any between-song banter, and left the hall after 75 minutes, declining to return for an encore. At least in the vicinity of our alpine perch, the acclaim was unmistakably tinged with reproach. "What was that?" my wife asked me on our long train journey home, where we arrived to find ourselves in the midst of a power cut that affected most of southern England. Darkness fell on a subdued household.

It would be churlish to dwell at any length on Dylan's private life, or to deny that at one time his drug consumption, promiscuity, and general truculence did indeed portend a cast of mind that would ignite the fires of originality his admirers claim for him. In November 1965, he married Sara Lownds, with whom he had four children. In her divorce petition of March 1977, Mrs. Dylan remarked,

> I can't go home without fear for my safety. I was in such fear of him that I locked doors in the house to protect myself from his violent outbursts and temper tantrums . . . He has struck me in the face injuring my jaw . . . My children are greatly disturbed by my husband's behavior, and the bizarre way he has elected to live.

Among Dylan's domestic peccadilloes was a reported taste for well-up-

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holstered young women, whom his wife and children would periodically encounter at the family breakfast table. In June 1986, he married Carolyn Dennis, a longtime member of his backing group, and had a daughter by her, though not in that order. Miss Dennis continued to appear onstage with her husband, and the marriage remained a closely guarded secret until it, too, ended in a somewhat lurid divorce. Dylan's second wife was to remark enigmatically that "Bob has been a wonderful, active father," who has "eight or nine children." Miss Dennis was at least able to enjoy a degree of access consistently denied to other of her husband's colleagues. According to Dylan's biographer Howard Sounes,

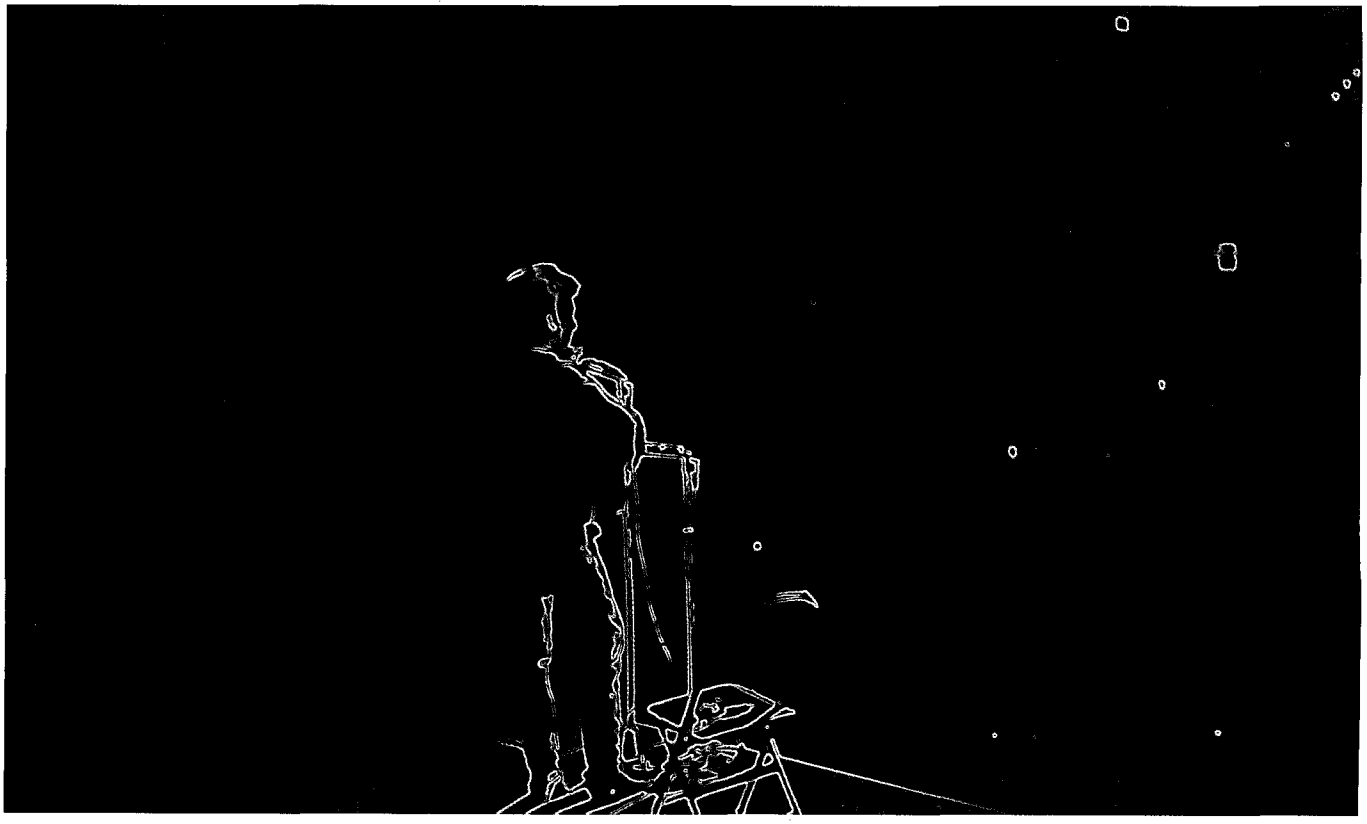
> None of his long-time musicians had many opportunities to speak to Bob. He traveled in his own bus, stayed apart in hotels, and often the first time they saw him during the day was when they walked on stage together. When the show was in progress, he would often scowl at them as if he thought everything was terrible. Afterward he went directly to his own bus and disappeared into the night.

With the newsreels of Auschwitz still fresh in the memory when he went to school, Dylan grew up in a practicing Jewish family that would have been well aware both of the strain of virulent antisemitism abroad, and of its more muted variety closer to home in Minnesota. As he's said, Dylan's faith appealed to his search for "meaning" in life, and perhaps also helped him feel an outsider. In May 1954, he had his *bar mitzvah*. Twenty-five years later, shortly after his divorce from Sara Lownds, Dylan participated in Bible-study classes at the Vineyard School of Discipleship in Reseda, California, whose pastor, Kenn Gulliksen, has recalled, "We then went over to Bob's house and ministered to him. He responded by saying, yes, he did in fact want Christ in his life. And he prayed that day and received the Lord."

Of late, Dylan has tended to retreat from the popular notion that he is a "born again" Christian. "I've never said that. That's just a media term," he informed Kurt Loder of *Rolling Stone*. When Loder asked whether he subscribed to any organized religion, Dylan replied, "Not really. Uh, the Church of the Poisoned Mind." More recently, Dylan has been linked with the Hasidic Chabad-Lubavitch movement, which favors a rigorously academic reading of the Judaic texts and purportedly seeks to reconcile the "mundane and materialistic" aspects of life with the "essential godliness" of creation. By releasing his album of traditional Christmas anthems, Dylan would seem to have exhibited the refreshing independence and whimsicality that lie at the heart of his spiritual life no less than they do his music.

Bob Dylan: visionary, poet—stereotypes and expectations accumulated down the years that may not always withstand cold scrutiny. When *Rolling Stone* and the rest insist that he is "one of the great geniuses of our time," one is tempted to ask the old Jewish question: "By a genius is he a genius?" In one of his rare interviews, Dylan has thanked his legion of devoted fans for never "judging" him. That may be precisely the problem.

Christopher Sandford is a Seattle-based journalist and author.



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No More Blues

by Tony Outhwaite

Where is the blues in jazz when we need it? Throughout most of its history jazz was a blues music, at least until the *avant-gardists* of the 1960's tried to burn down the cathedral in their trumped-up revolution against American society, playing music unfocused in concept, unmusical in sound, and unpleasant in performance. They made an outrageous amount of noise that bore little relation to the blues or to jazz, and many sensible black jazzmen—including saxophonists Lou Donaldson, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Eddie Chamblee, George Coleman, and Houston Person—have been quick to call this new "music" what it was: a crock. Said Donaldson at the time, "The guys say they're searching but actually all they need to find is a good saxophone or trumpet teacher and their search would be over because they would teach them how to play it."

Davis blamed the pundits: "Without the critics' sanction it never would have gotten off the ground." More recently Coleman observed that

> Coltrane could do it because he could play blues and standards, but Albert Ayler and Frank Wright and those guys could only play noise. No melodies or harmonies, they just didn't play good.

Noise, but no blues. Yet the blues has always been a vital part of jazz and, in the proper hands, a primal feeling elevating solos on even the most mainstream popular standards—like "Autumn Leaves" and "The Man I Love"—into little works of art that spoke volumes to listeners black and white. From Dixieland ditties to Louis Armstrong's "West End Blues" in 1928 to Count Basie's first blues-riff-oriented orchestra of 1936 to the 12-bar blues constructions of Charlie "Bird" Parker and other beboppers, and on through the hard-bop era and organ-jazz rage of the 1960's right up to jazz-rock fusion, the blues was always present. Bassist and composer Charles Mingus once made the valid point that "the blues was in the churches," but it was also in jazz itself, in all groups and bands and at all tempos.

Prominent in all this from the 1930's on was the big-toned, bluesy tenor saxophonist, who remained front and center in jazz even after the guitar became the dominant instrument in rock music in the 1960's. From Coleman Hawkins, the first standout tenor soloist in jazz history, through Lester Young, a first-class blues player with a lighter tone, to later stalwarts like Illinois Jacquet, Arnett Cobb, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Wardell Gray, Jimmy Forrest, Buddy Tate, Ben Webster, Gene Ammons, Dexter Gordon, Stanley Turrentine, and others too numerous to mention, bluesy tenors were known for rocking the house. Men like these were featured in big bands and smaller combos, and many local players were almost as good, often kept from national recognition only by the lack of connections, lack of confidence, personal habits, or simple bad luck that deprived them of opportunities to record and travel regularly. These included George Kelly, Julian Dash, and Al King in New York City; Tom Archia and Claude McLin in Chicago; Jimmy Oliver and Bootsie Barnes in Philadelphia; Joe Alexander, Nate Fitzgerald, and Weasel Parker in Cleveland; Jimmy Coe and Pookie Johnson in Indianapolis; and mainstay tenor soloists in blues-based black orchestras like David Van Dyke and Pervis Henson in Buddy Johnson's big band, Paul Bascomb of Erskine Hawkins' orchestra, and Jesse Powell and Big Al Sears in the Count Basie and Duke Ellington organizations. All were capable of raising the roof at the black theaters, ballrooms, and clubs they played in the big cities and the tobacco warehouses they played down South. There were other trained jazzmen who worked in more of a rhythm-and-blues vein but easily straddled the line: Red Prysock, Sil Austin, Noble "Thin Man" Watts, Willis "Gator Tail" Jackson, Hal "Cornbread" Singer, and Sam "The Man" Taylor. These were forceful stylists who knew music thoroughly, improvised well, and generated a fine sense of rhythm. And no one ever tried to claim that modernists like Johnny Griffin, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Junior Cook, Sonny Stitt, Joe Henderson, and Hank Mobley weren't good blues players.

Today? They're all gone. About the only veteran big-toned bluesy tenors left are Houston Person, Red Holloway, Plas Johnson, and Sonny Rollins—not known so much as a blues player but excellent at it—but these men are all over 70, with Rollins pushing 80 and Holloway two years past that. The bluesters were basic and unique, able to infuse nearly everything they played with an intensity that reached out to people and an offhanded mastery that made it look easy. To hear Davis's jaunty medium-tempo solo on "Don't Blame Me" during a live recording at New York's Birdland in 1954, Austin's high-energy 1956 track "Dogwood Junction," or Jackson's medium-tempo 1961 treatment of "Girl of My Dreams" is to hear bluesy basics taken to a higher level of communication, with a "now listen to this" urgency.

So what happened? In one sense, education happened, which, in this case, was a bad thing. Earlier players were often largely self-taught, developing through trial and error a personal sound and manner of phrasing beyond the reach of the academic theories of teachers and clinicians preaching a standard approach and producing blandness. Further, most earlier saxophonists came up through the big-band era before amplification was commonplace. They knew that to be heard over the blaring arrangements of a big band, one needed to project, especially to black audiences. Willis Jackson once critiqued the sound of younger tenor players as "what I call a peashooter sound, they sound like they're playing alto on the tenor." The older masters did things their own way: Hawkins, Young, Webster, Ammons, Tate, Gordon, and Davis sound nothing alike, but each was forceful, distinctive, and instantly recognizable—Hawkins' sound jagged and powerful on faster tempos,

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Young's more mellow and legato, Davis's a coarse-toned bark, Gordon's a booming foghorn. Ammons was a master of soul, funky and persuasive; Tate the quintessential swaggering, big-toned Texas tenor; and Webster played with a deep, velvety buzz. Killer blues players at fast tempos, every one—and on slow blues and ballads, working within the romantic intricacies of chord changes and melody lines, they could break your heart.

Younger players take microphones for granted and studio dubbing and editing as a way of hiding mistakes. The saxophonists of an earlier generation, much more secure in their skills, aimed to get things right the first time around in both recording studios and clubs. One thing they never did was to damp down the blues feeling, which too many younger players, with technique to spare and some educated at such elegant conservatories as Berklee, Peabody, Hartt, and even Juilliard, seem to regard as an enemy. They can swing, but the bluesy snap, crackle, and pop of their forebears is gone, bred out of them by an odd-fellow combination of overschooling and racial integration that, socially overdue and justified though it was, took black players away from the natural ethnic audiences that originally dictated the way they sounded.

Today's young players—many of them black and well connected musically—are now into their 30's and 40's, well past the age by which earlier generations had perfected a sound. Not to dismiss the accomplishments of Joshua Redman, Branford Marsalis, Walter Blanding, James Carter, Mark Turner, and others, but their lack of blues feeling makes them uninteresting. The slurred phrasing of Joe Lovano, a highly regarded white player, has nothing of the blues to it.

Sometimes a hit record is all it takes to revive a sound or style. Yet the chaos in the record industry that makes it possible for young listeners to download any track onto their iPods, a boon to rock musicians, has actually made it more difficult for a would-be jazzman to tap into a 1958 Gene Ammons track and follow his nose in that direction. Further, with the decline of jazz radio, it is even more difficult for youngsters to hear of people to emulate. How do you listen for something you don't know about if you don't know where to look for it?

Lou Donaldson, one of the best alto men of all time, regularly preaches the gospel of listening to older players from history even as he decries, in club dates, "Fusion and confusion, Kenny G music, 50 Cent and Diddy." George Coleman complains that the students he teaches in New York "don't even listen to Coltrane, let alone Bird—they're trying to reach out into the blue and create something that's all self-involved, and you just can't ignore history and be a complete player." None of these trends is good for jazz—or blues. The spontaneous improvised nature of jazz makes tradition, approach, and sound crucial. It was natural, then, that when Stanley Turrentine died in the fall of 2000, bassist Ray Brown said of Houston Person, "he's one of the few left with any honest grease."

Grease may be a naughty word to people watching their diet, but in jazz the term is a compliment, an insiders' slangy reference to such factors as blues, feeling, and attitude, and most often all these in combination. Within a two-week period in January 2009, three bluesy saxophonists who together played significant roles in Ray Charles' 16-piece big band of the early 1960's passed away: baritone saxophonist Leroy Cooper, multireed man David "Fathead" Newman, and alto saxophonist Hank Crawford. Newman, whose original instrument was alto, began his career playing baritone in Charles' small group of the early 1950's and was promoted to tenor when the regular tenor man, Don Wilkerson, left the band after an argument with Charles over narcotics. Newman later became known as a multireed master on tenor, alto, and soprano saxophones, but throughout his career he was best known for his work on tenor—and he played a mean blues with plenty of healthy grease.

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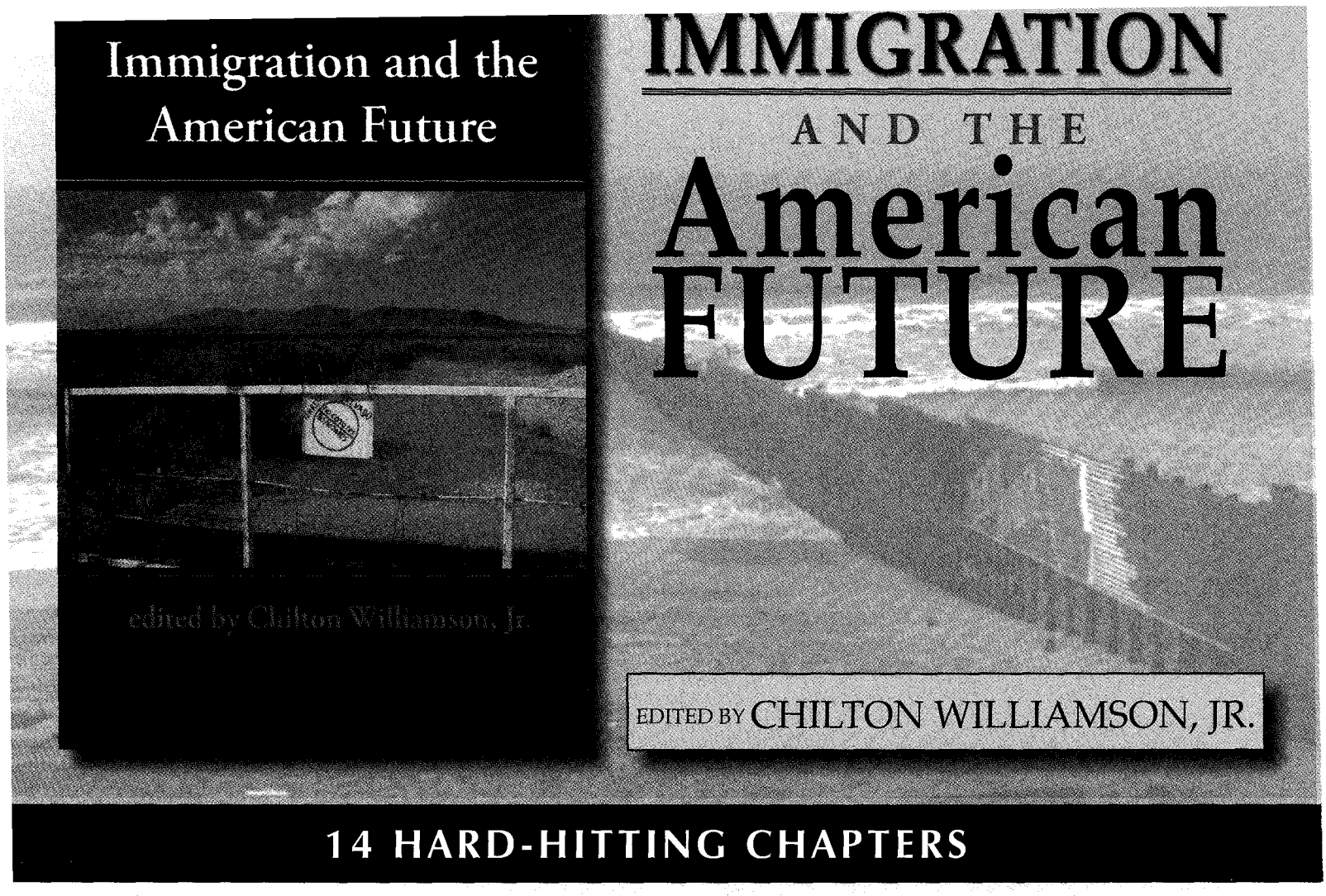

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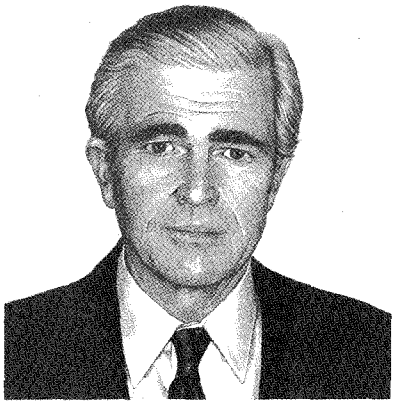
Got Your Goat



The Men Who Stare at Goats

Produced by Smoke House and BBC Films
Directed by Grant Heslov
Screenplay by Peter Straughan from the book by Jon Ronson
Distributed by Overture Films

I'll say this for *The Men Who Stare at Goats*, the delightful new film from first-time director Grant Heslov and his producing partner, George Clooney: It wastes no time getting to the point. It opens with a close-up of the wondrously named Brigadier General Hopgood (Stephen Lang) glaring ferociously at the wall across from his desk, his sweat-swathed face apoplectically red. Is he about to have an aneurysm, or will he blow his brains out? Neither. Stepping from behind his military-neat in-box, he abruptly sprints toward the wall. After making loud contact with said wall, he falls to the floor, where he lies silent for a few disconsolate moments. You see, he was sure his body would slip through the functional cinder block as would a sylph's through silk brocade.

By the time the film ends another man will attempt the same feat, and the outcome either will or will not confirm whatever it is this evanescently gossamer narrative has on its mind. I don't mean to suggest the movie is fey, but it does seem incapable of supporting a definite thought, let alone a theme. And that is its charm.

The film's source is Jon Ronson's book of the same irresistible title. Ronson, a journalist who writes for the British newspaper the *Guardian*, tells the story of the U.S. Army's dabbling in psychic alternatives to military hardware. In the 1980's, Maj. Gen. Albert Stubblebine III fell under the influence of Lt. Col. Jim Channon, who, in the wake of the Vietnam debacle, convinced him that it was time to try a new tack. Conventional war was no longer viable; the Army must harness a panoply of New Age nostrums and ninja-warrior techniques. Soon, Channon claimed, field soldiers would have the powers necessary for levitation, psychokinesis, and invisibility. And that was just for starters. As they cultivated these powers, GIs would take on the nation's enemies with "sparkly eyes" and "automatic hugs," shooting them with so much positive energy there would be hardly any need to engage in warfare at all. Of course, there would always be a recalcitrant few, but they could be vanquished with the superior battle methods to be acquired through Buddhist meditation and ninjutsu. Channon named his platoon The First Earth Battalion and staffed it with men he was glad to call his Jedi warriors.

When Ronson came upon Channon's story, he immediately recognized its humorous potential and milked it for all it was worth, adopting the persona of a journalist bemused by what he happened to come across in his travels. As for the validity of Channon's claims, Ronson remains studiously agnostic, thereby enhancing both his report's intrigue and its humor. Screenwriter Peter Straughan follows suit, beginning his narrative with an admirably turned evasion: "More of this is true than you would believe." Indeed. Ronson's book has been turned into a charmingly lightweight comedy, garnished with a *soupçon* of satire to enhance the flavor.

Here's the story, such as it is. Under Heslov's creative wand—the same one he used to fictionalize (somewhat deceitfully, it must be noted) the showdown between Edward R. Murrow and Sen. Joseph McCarthy in *Good Night, and Good Luck* three years ago—Ronson has been transformed into a feckless Ann Arbor journalist named Bob Wilton (Ewan McGregor) who is sent out to cover a human-interest story. There's a local man who claims to have the power of "remote viewing," a skill he originally learned as a member of the Army's Psychic Warrior brigade. Wilton concludes that the man is certifiable, but he's nevertheless mildly impressed when he witnesses him using his power of telepathy to knock a hamster off its pins. Upon questioning, the psy-warrior says his feat is nothing special. Why, one of his psychic buddies could glare a goat to death. A few improbable plot complications later, Wilton finds himself in Iraq interviewing the goat-killing prodigy, Lyn Cassaday (George Clooney). Wilton wheedles, and Cassaday agrees to illustrate his various psychic talents. To do so, he proposes to take Wilton into the desert to teach him the way of the Jedi as he himself had been taught by his mentor. Inside jokes don't come any lamer than this, which is part of the fun. McGregor never falters. He didn't portray the ultimate Jedi, Obi-Wan Kenobi, in *Star Wars* without picking up some of the warrior's legendary self-control. "What's a Jedi warrior?" he asks innocently enough, as if it were possible there could be anyone on earth who doesn't know.

As they bowl across the desert in a sedan, Cassaday keeps his eyes on the sky rather than on the featureless sand stretching into the middle distance. When Wilton asks why, Cassaday smiles. "Cloud bursting," he explains. "It keeps me sharp." When the particular cloud he's been watching breaks up, he chortles, "It's gone," after which feat, he immediately smashes into a two-foot-high boulder. This is Cassaday all over. His head's so high

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in the clouds that terrestrial matters elude him at every turn. And yet his Jedi powers have made him so fearless that he's usually able to deal with the dangers he recklessly runs into. When they are picked up by some hostile Iraqis, Cassaday assures his new sidekick that nothing bad will happen. He will use sparkly eyed suggestion on their captors. When this seems in danger of failing, he naturally resorts to a Hong Kong ninja leap. How can a man this mad fail?

Clooney once again proves to be a master *farceur*. As in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and *Burn After Reading*, he is peerless at playing daft bumblers who, against all evidence, think they have everything under control. Here he has acquired his talent for unwarranted confidence from his mentor, Lt. Col. Bill Django (Jeff Bridges, playing the film's version of Channon). Clooney and company decided to fictionalize Channon, perhaps to give themselves a freer hand with their evident inventions, or maybe out of fear of being sued for misrepresenting what is surely itself Ronson's sustained exercise in misrepresentation.

In any event, Bridges plays Django as the daddy of mad gurus. He's so utterly convinced of his project that he's able to persuade the military's honchos to give him funding and men to carry out his noble plan. As he sees it, "The world's superpower needs superheroes." He loses support in 1989, however, when he makes a tactical error. He cheerfully assures his superiors that one of his trained psychic warriors can locate Gen. Manuel Noriega, the Panamanian thug-in-chief who went missing when his former patron, George H.W. Bush, grew testy about his performance. After deep meditation, Django's man tells the Army's brass that they should . . . This comic stroke is too good to give away.

Accounts vary, but it seems the Army has spent many, many millions of our money on psychic research and may still be investigating its possibilities. They have consulted with frauds such as Uri Geller, the Israeli spoon bender whom Johnny Carson exposed on his show in 1973, well before some of Channon's loonier forays into psychokinesis retailed in this film. How to explain the military's infatuation with this nonsense? If your business is killing and being killed in war, you might not unreasonably come to yearn for bloodless alternatives. Django, we learn, had a battlefield epiphany in Vietnam the day his troops held their fire while being sniped at by a lone gunman firing at them in plain view. Even when they finally began to fire back, they missed the shooter again and again. Afterward, Django learned that research indicates nearly 90 percent of new recruits will deliberately fire high rather than hit their targets. It seems they don't want the responsibility of killing, at least not at first. This led Django to wonder if there was some way he could take this innate gentleness and turn it to military account. His answer: Train mystic warriors who, whenever possible, will fight with their minds rather than their weapons.

Loopy? Undoubtedly. But the appeal of such a notion is perhaps not as improbable as it might at first seem. Many years ago, I visited Camp Lejeune to see a friend who had joined the Marine Corps. At the base's bar that night, I met a lieutenant who had been reading the French Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin. This man, who had been trained to kill with a formidable assortment of weapons, including his very own hands, waxed eloquent about *The Divine Milieu* and Chardin's speculation regarding the noosphere, his term for a technologically assisted neural network that would gather our entire species together into a snug telepathic embrace. We were marching, this Marine assured me, toward a shimmering collective understanding.

After a few drinks, I was impressed by the fellow's eloquent commitment to universal peace. In the sobriety of the next morning, however, I had my doubts. I reflected that he had something in common with Joseph Conrad's Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*. He was a voice in the wilderness pouring forth the collective hope of all dreamers since men began to lift their eyes from troublesome boulders in the desert to the inviting clouds above. Well, why not? Why wouldn't anyone intimately acquainted with the iron reality of war prefer the soft, vaporous clouds on high?

Goats has none of Conrad's ironic pessimism. It's a jaunty little film that takes its principals at their word, or at least pretends to. Cassaday and Django may be daft, but, unlike many a war tactician one could name, they would never willingly send underequipped young men into a meaningless battle.

About those goats: Near the film's end we witness Cassaday furrowing his brow and knocking one over by sheer mental force. Quite a display! But you should know this: There's a species of the animal known as fainting or myotonic goats. They suffer from a genetic anomaly that makes them unusually sensitive to surprise. When startled, their muscles freeze, and they instantly fall over. You can understand how inviting a spectacle this would make for minds suitably disposed. ©

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Courtesy

I have read somewhere that courtesy is the highest form of charity. Whether or not that is true (I like to think it is), courtesy is certainly charity in its least expensive form. Which prompts the question of why, in the age of what an anonymous wit a generation or so ago dubbed *conspicuous benevolence*, it is the rarest form of charity as well.

Conspicuous charity is never cheap. Like every other form of economic and social ostentation, it is exceedingly expensive. Yet the gratification the conspicuously benevolent earn from it seems to be worth the price. Another, much cheaper form of charitable indulgence is the acquiescent pleasure some people claim to take in paying confiscatory taxes: in the redistribution, that is, of their own wealth at the gentle behest of their respective local, state, and national governments. (Concerning this business of taxation, I intend to have a serious conversation some day with an intellectually and theologically responsible priest regarding the spiritual accounting in respect of forcible charity in a socialist country like our own where the poor, legally entitled to welfare payments tied to the cost of living at subsistence level, should not—theoretically speaking—have need of public charity at all.) The abundant generosity of the rich, and even the merely affluent, is the more surprising in a materialist society in which nobody becomes rich by being either spiritual or generous, but rather the opposite. In the circumstances, you might expect these titans of charity rather to expend their beneficence through personal expressions and demonstrations of courtesy, which cost them nothing materially, in preference to hemorrhagings of wealth and infusions of capital into the coffers of more or less faceless charitable organizations, no matter that their contributions are legally deductible from their tax liabilities at the end of the year. So much money jettisoned on industrial charity, when all that is really needed to be charitable in the highest and most profound sense is fairness and civility toward one's business competitors, and simple, natural humanity toward underlings and servants! One would think it a bargain, a pearl of great price, the one bargain with the Devil that the Devil was certain to lose. But no—the charitable man is a metaphorical prince in the world of today, while the courteous man is as nearly extinct as the real prince of yesterday's world.

Inbred courtesy costs nothing, neither effort nor even thought on the part of the bestower. Like the theological grace with which it is associated, courtesy is a gift—a gift at a distance perhaps, bequeathed directly by a gracious upbringing and indirectly by a gracious society. For the courteous man, courtesy is a motor, a reflexive, action, like breathing; a natural response that is the next thing to instinctive with him. But if the cost is nothing, the benefit is limitless. The courteous man is at ease with his fellow man. Better yet, he is at peace with him, and at a profound level. Courtesy, however formal and even condescending in the original connotation of the word, is human warmth, which is always a true pleasure, not an inconvenience or a burden. And human warmth is brotherhood, a sense of being at one with mankind, and therefore with God. "If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers it shows he is a citizen of the world," Francis Bacon wrote. The saints gave alms in order to believe. So it is with courteous people, who dispense courteous gestures as a type of alms. "He giveth grace unto the lowly," says the Proverb. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble," Saint James said. And, "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," according to Saint Paul. Thus, in the divine economy, grace flows from God to the courteous, and thence to the graceless, the uncouth (even if Baltasar Gracián held equal courtesy to all to be an injustice). That is infinitely more than the Bill & Melinda Gates or the Ford Foundation can accomplish, or even the Department of Health and Human Services. One cannot purchase grace, or what, in a somewhat different sense, Burke called the "unbought grace of life," either for oneself, or for others.

Courtesy, theologically speaking, is a fruit of Christian faith; in social terms, it is an aspect of hierarchical society, not just extraneous but positively antithetical to the secular, mass-democratic, and industrial-commercial world of the past two centuries. Courtesy, though typically exchanged among equals belonging to the higher classes, is essentially *de haut en bas*. As Claude Polin has noted in these pages, democracy is the worship of man, and the worship of man amounts to the worship of self. Men who worship themselves will accept nothing but wealth from those superior to themselves in wealth and power, and they will confer tax-deductible wealth alone on their inferiors. No other transfer satisfies them, and every other offends them. Democrats do not go about bestowing alms upon one another, nor do they feel the need for grace descending from any source; assertive equality in the here and now is enough for them, and provides them with a type of human connection they find entirely satisfactory. For the ideological democrat, courtesy is at best artificial, at worst condescending: either the expression of assumed superiority or

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else the equivalent of an extravagant sartorial impediment, like culottes, or lace cuffs and collars.

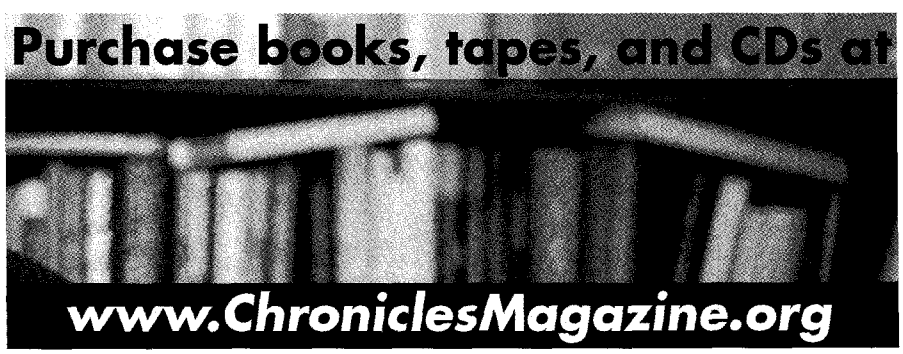
Democratic man insists on casualness, a value closely associated with ideology and the natural enemy of courtesy. Courtesy implies aspiration as well as condescension; casualness, an existence maintained entirely on the broad horizontal. Casual behavior is the behavior of the mass man, of whom Ortega said that he aspires to nothing, believing himself to be at once perfect and exactly like everyone else, an identity of which he is as supremely proud as Louis XIV was of his Bourbon lineage. Casualness, like democratism, is hedonism, which is another word for nihilism. Casualness in manners, dress, and general comportment, as in thought and art, has tunneled deep into the subterranean realm of the malformed—*monstrum horrendum, informe*—where it has become that paradoxical thing: casualness as a form of social aggression and chaos. So the political news in the first section of the *New York Times* is reflected by the fashion and arts sections of the same paper, where the wild dress of Somali pirates appears in only slightly altered form on the designer's runway, and the social dissonance and uproar of the pro-abortion and "gay marriage" campaigns are evoked by the reviewers of rock concerts and postmodern Broadway musicals. Worse still is the Sunday "society page," as the editors persist in calling it, though the phrase has become an obvious and dreadful misnomer. The old *New York Social Register*, I understand, has been replaced by a new *Social Register*, which "anyone" may get into. But whatever the complaint against old New York society, the fact remains that it was at least courteous, and it was courteous because it was at once formal and considerate, and it was formal and considerate because it believed in something quintessentially gracious—even if that something was only "Society."

It is impossible to imagine two further opposites than courtesy and ideology, and we live in an age that is wholly ideological. Courtesy comes from God; ideology is the product of men who would be gods—and, indeed, in their own minds, are gods. Ideologists tell us that the world is driven by abstract historical forces; men of courtesy act as if it is held together by personal gestures and mutual accommodations. Nowhere is the difference between these two things more stark than in the relationship between the sexes. Courtesy, of course, is descended from *courtoisie*, from chivalry: a cultural phenomenon unique to the Christian world. Once the chivalric relationship between men and women is denied and indeed proscribed, as nowadays, courtesy itself becomes impossible. Courtesy in this respect is founded in a sense of difference, ideology in the insistence on sameness—sameness even between male and female, the *grande difference* C.S. Lewis considered the universal Great Divide. When Ransom, in *Perelandra*, saved the Lady from Weston, he performed an act of heroism that was heroic in the degree that it was also an act of *courtoisie*. Not only would rescuing the King have been theological nonsense, it would have been, metaphysically speaking, an incomplete action as well. Feminism has made the type of courtesy called chivalry, based on the biological fact of there being a stronger and a weaker sex, a fairer and a hairier one, functionally impossible.

But not, fortunately for what remains of the Christian world, intellectually impossible. It is true that chivalry has been banished from contemporary art, as it has been from contemporary behavior. Yet courtesy has a deep intellectual and artistic, as well as a moral, appeal, and that appeal is a deeply human one. Courtesy in its intellectual and artistic form is exemplified by the ballads of the Troubadours, by the Knights of the Round Table, King Arthur and Camelot, by Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, if not terribly well by Tristan and Isolde. (I like to imagine that Cervantes, were he alive today and writing a sequel to *Don Quixote*, would be inclined to go easier on chivalric books and their influence.) Later it was embodied, in even more artificial and stylized form, in the person of the model courtier established by Castiglione in his *Book of the Courtier*. And chivalry is not completely absent from modern letters, not even American letters. Faulkner's novels are chivalrous in a high degree, and so are those of Walker Percy, who titled one of his *The Last Gentleman*.

Percy's may be the last book written for years to come whose hero is a gentleman, yet it is far from impossible—rather, it is likely—that literature will be the means by which chivalry, and simple courtesy, are reintroduced to a world jaded by shameless selfishness, barbaric manners, and atrocious art. Certainly there is no cause to expect courtesy to return through democratic politics, public education, or even, at this point, religion. But there is every ground for hope it will do so *via* the medium of the literary imagination, which is certain, soon or late, to reject ideology—in particular, that aspect of ideology called feminism which contradicts every human instinct, social, biological, and artistic—in preference for natural, social, and supernatural reality.

What we postmoderns call sex, that scourge of courtesy and of civilization, might easily be the basis for the eventual salvation of these three things—and hence of chivalry, and of Christianity itself. ◁C▷



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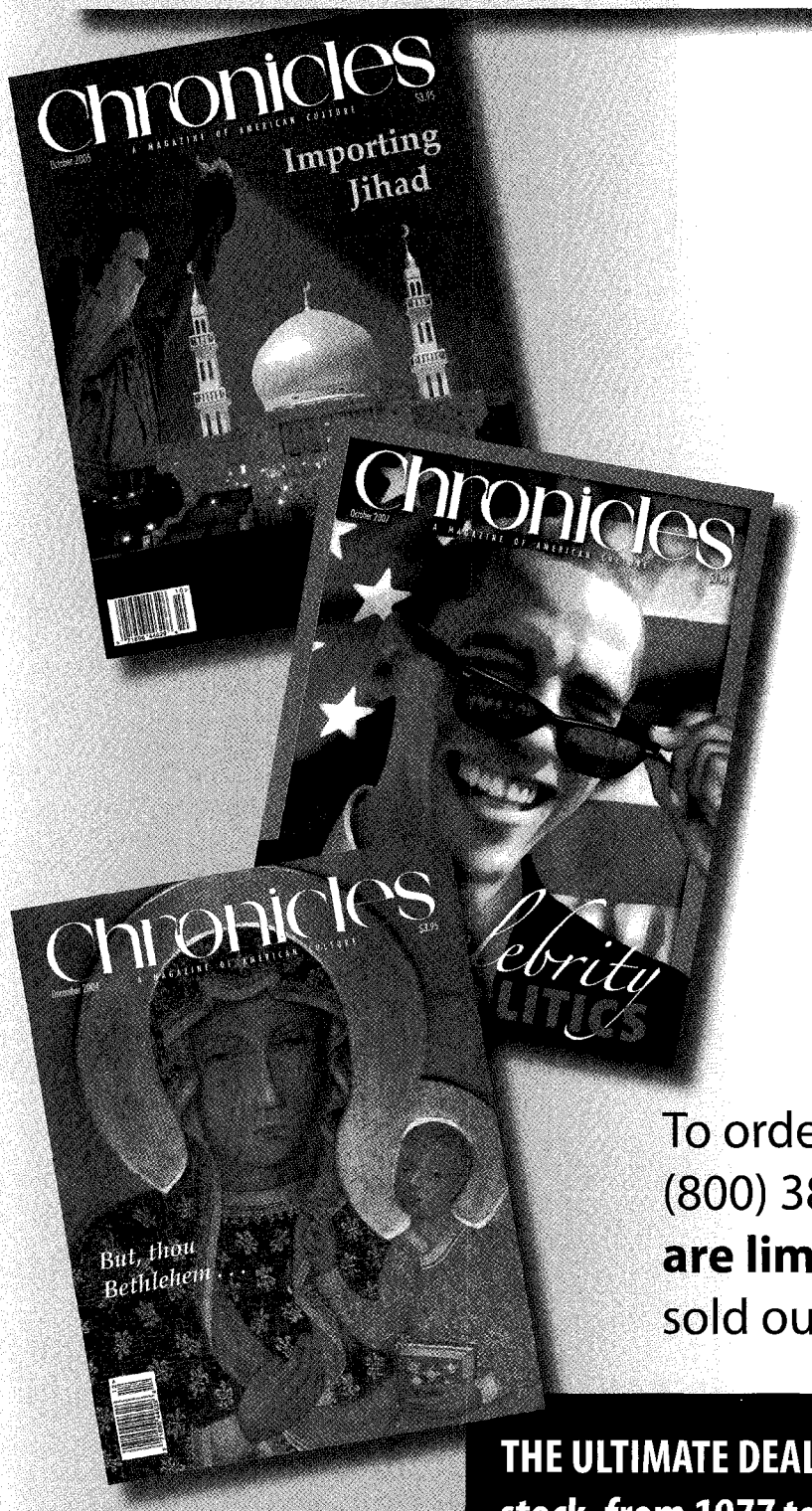

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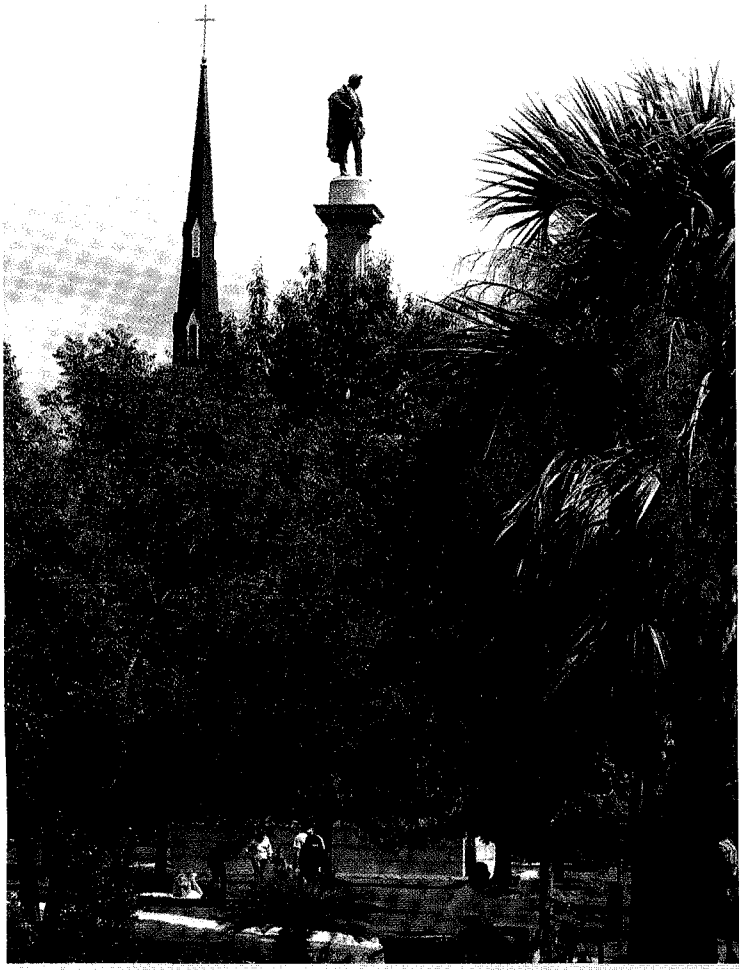
EIGHTH ABBEVILLE INSTITUTE SCHOLAR'S CONFERENCE

"State Nullification, Secession, and the Human Scale of Political Order"

Charleston, South Carolina, February 4 -7, 2010



George Kennan, author of the Cold War policy to contain the Soviet Union and described by some as the "conscience of America," taught that a regime can be dysfunctional by simply becoming *too large*. Near the end of a long career in service to his country, he thought the American regime had grown too large for self government and that we should begin a public debate on how to divide it in the direction of a more human scale.

Today, for the first time in 144 years, State nullification and secession have entered public discourse. The Founders considered nullification and secession as remedies to unconstitutional acts of the central government. The aim of the conference is to recover this neglected part of the American constitutional tradition and to explore its intimations for today.

Registration:

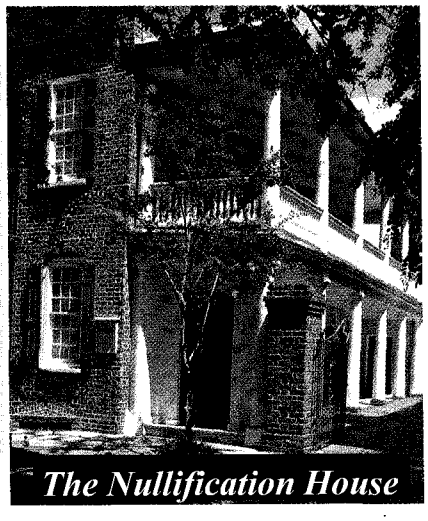
Place: The Francis Marion Hotel at the low conference rate of $129 per night (double or single) ***while they last***. For reservations call the Hotel at (843) 722-0600.

Conference Fee: includes lectures, breakfast, luncheon reception at the Washington Light Infantry Armory, two finger food suppers, the banquet, and transportation to view items rarely seen: South Carolina ordinance of secession, the original secession flag, the secession banner, and much more:$350 if received by **November 15**; $400 thereafter. **Commuter:** lectures only–$200; with banquet $260. **Scholarships:** a limited number for full time college or graduate students. **To Register**: (and for more about the lectures) visit www.abbevilleinstitute.org. For all other questions call (404) 377-0484 or email the Institute at: abbevilleinst@bellsouth.net.

Lecturers:

- **Kent Masterson Brown**, Historian and Constitutional Lawyer
- **Marshall DeRosa,** Political Science, Florida Atlantic University
- **Thomas DiLorenzo,** Economics, Loyola University, Maryland
- **Peter Jones,** Former Director, The Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, and Fellow, Royal Society of Edinburgh • **Yuri Maltsev,** Economics, Carthage College and former advisor to Gorbachev's government on *perestroika* • **Donald Livingston,** Philosophy, Emory University • **Thomas Naylor,** Founder, The Second Vermont Republic • **Lawrence W. Reed,** President, Foundation for Economic Education • **Kirkpatrick Sale,** Director of The Middlebury Institute • **Kyle Scott**, Political Science, University of Houston • **Clyde Wilson,** History, University of South Carolina

Visit Historic Charleston: The conference Hotel is within walking distance of the graceful historic section. The conference rate applies for days immediately before and after the conference. Boat tours to Fort Sumter leave from Liberty Square, a short walk from the hotel. See www.fortsumtertours.com.



The Nullification House

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The Rockford Institute's Fifth Annual Winter School

The Greek Roots of Christendom

Athens and Delphi • January 20-27, 2010

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Winter School faculty include: Thomas and Gail Fleming, Christopher Check, Aaron D. Wolf, and special guest lecturer Fr. Hugh Barbour, O.Praem., Prior of Saint Michael's Abbey, Silverado, California.

The price for the Winter School includes:

- seven nights' (arrive Jan. 20; checkout on Jan. 27) lodging at the Acropolis Select Hotel (*www.acropoliselect.gr*), a fully renovated, three-star hotel within walking distance of the Acropolis;
- daily breakfast; five group meals;
- all lectures, discussions, and walking tours;
- selected entrance fees to museums;
- and a motor-coach excursion to Delphi.

Prices

Single	$1,695.00 EA ☐
Couple	$2,495.00 EA ☐
Shared Double	$1,395.00 EA ☐

Registration is limited. Previous Convivia have sold out. Registration fees are based on current exchange rates; the Institute reserves the right to assess a fee, should rates change significantly at the dollar's expense. The Institute will make every effort to help find roommates for students who wish to take advantage of the shared-double rate. If no roommate is available, the difference between the shared-double rate and the single-occupancy rate will be assessed.

Full-time undergraduate and graduate students interested in scholarships, anyone interested in supporting the Institute's Scholarship Fund, and anyone desiring more information should contact: Christopher Check

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